

NORMAN H. BILTZ:
MEMOIRS OF “DUKE OF NEVADA”
DEVELOPMENTS OF LAKE TAHOE, CALIFORNIA
AND NEVADA; REMINISCENCES OF NEVADA
POLITICAL AND FINANCIAL LIFE

Interviewee: Norman Henry Biltz

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Description

Norman H. Biltz was born in Connecticut in 1902. Moving west as a young man, he worked at a number of jobs before finding a profession in real estate promotion and development in California and Nevada, and an avocation in state and national politics.

Mr. Biltz played an important role in Nevada economic and political circles for more than four decades. He was active in selling ranches throughout Nevada from the 1930s on, in developing what he believes to be the first housing tract in the state and various high-income housing areas in southwest Reno, and in starting several other businesses. He was influential in bringing a number of millionaires to Nevada to enjoy its tax advantages.

Politically, he was involved in the Wingfield “bipartisan machine” which allegedly dominated the state’s politics for decades. When this group became transformed into what he preferred to call the McCarran organization, Biltz provided a link between the two groups and expanded his political activities. As one of Senator Patrick McCarran’s friends and advisors and as a skilled and diligent participant in legislative politics within the state, he achieved such prominence that his name became associated with the word machine.

Mr. Biltz’s oral history includes accounts of his early life in the East and the trip west, discussions of economic developments at Lake Tahoe and in Nevada, recounting of work with Nevada tax legislation, anecdotes and information about the activities of Nevada and national politicians, the amusing tale of attempts by popular writers to tell the “Biltz story,” an appraisal of problems raised by Nevada’s gambling industry, and a philosophical conclusion.

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An Oral History Conducted by Mary Ellen Glass

University of Nevada Oral History Program

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PREFACE TO THE DIGITAL EDITION

Established in 1964, the University of Nevada Oral History Program (UNOHP) explores the remembered past through rigorous oral history interviewing, creating a record for present and future researchers. The program's collection of primary source oral histories is an important body of information about significant events, people, places, and activities in twentieth and twenty-first century Nevada and the West.

The UNOHP wishes to make the information in its oral histories accessible to a broad range of patrons. To achieve this goal, its transcripts must speak with an intelligible voice. However, no type font contains symbols for physical gestures and vocal modulations which are integral parts of verbal communication. When human speech is represented in print, stripped of these signals, the result can be a morass of seemingly tangled syntax and incomplete sentences—totally verbatim transcripts sometimes verge on incoherence. Therefore, this transcript has been lightly edited.

While taking great pains not to alter meaning in any way, the editor may have removed false starts, redundancies, and the “uhs,” “ahs,” and other noises with which speech is often liberally sprinkled; compressed some passages which, in unaltered form, misrepresent the chronicler's meaning; and relocated some material to place information in its intended context. Laughter is represented with [laughter] at the end of a sentence in which it occurs, and ellipses are used to indicate that a statement has been interrupted or is incomplete...or that there is a pause for dramatic effect.

As with all of our oral histories, while we can vouch for the authenticity of the interviews in the UNOHP collection, we advise readers to keep in mind that these are remembered pasts, and we do not claim that the recollections are entirely free of error. We can state, however, that the transcripts accurately reflect the oral history recordings on which they were based. Accordingly, each transcript should be approached with the

same prudence that the intelligent reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information. All statements made here constitute the remembrance or opinions of the individuals who were interviewed, and not the opinions of the UNOHP.

In order to standardize the design of all UNOHP transcripts for the online database, most have been reformatted, a process that was completed in 2012. This document may therefore differ in appearance and pagination from earlier printed versions. Rather than compile entirely new indexes for each volume, the UNOHP has made each transcript fully searchable electronically. If a previous version of this volume existed, its original index has been appended to this document for reference only. A link to the entire catalog can be found online at <http://oralhistory.unr.edu/>.

For more information on the UNOHP or any of its publications, please contact the University of Nevada Oral History Program at Mail Stop 0324, University of Nevada, Reno, NV, 89557-0324 or by calling 775/784-6932.

Alicia Barber
Director, UNOHP
July 2012

INTRODUCTION

Norman H. Biltz is a native of Connecticut, born in 1902. Moving west as a young man, he worked at a number of jobs before finding a profession in real estate promotion and development in California and Nevada, and an avocation in state and national politics. Professor Elmer Rusco's introduction outlines the importance of Mr. Biltz's participation in his chosen fields.

When invited to become an interviewee in the Oral History Project of the University of Nevada DRI Western Studies Center, Mr. Biltz accepted graciously. He was an enthusiastic and generous memoirist throughout the five taping sessions, all of which were conducted in his office at the Holiday Hotel, Reno, between November 8 and December 1, 1967. The interviewee appeared to enjoy the experience of recording his reminiscences, recounting events in which he participated in colorful and expressive language—occasionally with an audience of one or two of his business associates. Mr. Biltz returned the edited transcript of his memoir

virtually intact, with no significant changes. The script includes accounts of his early life in the East and the trip west, discussions of economic developments at Lake Tahoe and in Nevada, recounting of work with Nevada tax legislation, anecdotes and information about the activities of Nevada and national politicians, the amusing tale of attempts by popular writers to tell the "Biltz story," an appraisal of problems raised by Nevada's gambling industry, and a philosophical conclusion.

The Oral History Project of the DRI Western Studies Center attempts to preserve the past and the present for future research by tape-recording the reminiscences of persons who have played important parts in the development of Nevada and the West. Scripts resulting from the interviews are deposited in the Nevada and the West Collection of the University of Nevada (Reno) Library, and the Special Collections department of the University of Nevada (Las Vegas) Library. Norman Biltz's oral history may be used

only with his written permission during his lifetime. Permission to cite or quote from the script may be obtained through the Oral History Project.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the University of Nevada Library, Reno, in preparation of this script.

Mary Ellen Glass
University of Nevada
1969

SPECIAL INTRODUCTION

Norman Blitz has played an important role in Nevada economic and political circles for more than four decades. He was active in selling land at Lake Tahoe in the 1920's, in selling ranches throughout Nevada from the 1930's on, in developing what he believes to be the first housing tract in the state and various high-income housing areas in Southwest Reno, and in starting several other businesses. He was influential in bringing a number of millionaires to Nevada to enjoy its tax advantages. Politically, he was involved in the Wingfield "bipartisan machine" which allegedly dominated the state's politics for decades. When this group became transformed into what he prefers to call the McCarran organization, Biltz provided a link between the two groups and expanded his political activities. As one of Senator Patrick McCarran's friends and advisers and as a skilled and diligent participant in legislative politics within the state, he achieved such prominence that his name became associated with the word "machine."

This oral history gives Mr. Biltz's own account of much of his economic and political activity in Nevada over nearly half a century. A definite exposition of his role in the state in recent times will have to draw on other sources as well, but this history will be an invaluable aid to the writing of such a work.

Elmer R. Rusco, Director
Bureau of Governmental Research
1968

MY EARLY LIFE AND CAREERS

It has been suggested that I record my history, and particularly my operations in Nevada. The events will be reasonably correct, and the continuity will be confused. I was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, July 6, 1902, which now puts me on Social Security. My father was a road contractor in the early days. It's interesting maybe that there were not many cars in those days and the roads were built either of cobblestone, or wood block, or red bricks. My grandfather had a meat and produce business, particularly serving ships in Bridgeport, as Bridgeport, Connecticut, in those days, was a very big harbor. My grandfather died, and my father took over his business.

We lived in what would be now called a six-plex. In those days, it was called "flats." It was a respectable, but not wealthy area. My home life was quite normal, with my mother having one colored maid to help her. I spent all of my early life in Bridgeport, with my parents, or in Northampton, Massachusetts, with my grandmother.

It might be amusing that our family lawyer was a man named Calvin Coolidge, who lived in the same block with us. I remember when he ran for mayor of Northampton and was defeated. So the kids got lots of doughnuts and coffee, as the elders were over with the winner.

Around the age of eight, nine, or ten, I had a few enterprises going, at that early age. One interesting one was a shoe-shine box. I went around in the evening to people's houses and shined their shoes. I never worked on the street. For a good shoe shine, we got five cents, and eventually, a penny tip. But during the time I was shining my shoes, I got lots of information on my neighbors. Sometimes I heard they wanted to buy a new rug, they were going to move, or whatever. So I would jot these down in my mind, and go around to the furniture store or the wholesaler, and ask them if they would give me ten cents or twenty-five cents if I'd tell them where they could sell a rug or move some furniture, or whatever. And in those days, it amounted

to quite a little money—maybe two or three dollars a week, which was quite a lot of money in those days.

Then we had a sausage route. I think each load of sausage we delivered was about fifty or seventy-five pounds of sausage, as I remember. So I bought a little wagon to haul it around with. Being naturally lazy, I looked for a partner, and I found a great, big, strong guy named Angus Caswell. And we called him Angie. My family's friends used to get a big kick out of seeing me at the end of the route riding in the wagon, and Angie pulling me. But he had brawn and I had initiative.

Then one time I found out—in going through one of the factories with a friend of mine—I found them using newspapers to pack their products. So I went over to the foreman, and asked him what he paid for those newspapers. They had to be folded in quarters and tied in bundles. He said a dollar a hundred. Well, the rag man, as we called him in those days, was paying about a penny a hundred. So I put all the kids in the neighborhood to work and gave them five cents a hundred, and they had to come fold it. So when I'd get about a thousand pounds, I'd go down to the livery stable. In those days you hired a wagon and a horse for fifty cents. I'd take my papers over and sell them for a dollar hundred, and I was doing pretty good.

Then a kid named Alan "Red" Wilson followed me on a bicycle one day, and I didn't know it. So when I came out, he wanted to know what the business was. I knew he'd find that out, so I had to make him a partner. In fact, I think he was lazier than I was, but I did make him drive the horse. It was lots of fun in those days.

At Christmas time, my grandmother taught me how to make laurel wreaths and holly wreaths. So we'd rent the wagon and go

up into the hills where there was lots of holly and laurel and load it up in burlap sacks and bring it back and upset my mother's kitchen. Then I'd pay the kids some to make them up for me, and then I'd deliver them. This always made twenty-five or thirty dollars at Christmas time, so I could buy my mother the presents that I wanted to get her.

In the summer, for two weeks, I went to the YMCA camp. I remember well that this cost five dollars a week. So when I went to the camp, I'd go down and buy four dollars worth of gum and candy bars and that sort of stuff wholesale, and go up to the camp, which was about two miles from where the store was, and sell candy to the other kids. And that's where I learned to swim.

I went through grammar school, as all children did, except I did have one problem: when the first World War started, having a German name, although I'm only one-quarter German, I had to fight my way to school, and fight my way back from school, because Germans were very unpopular. So I was carrying a black eye about half the time. Those are my grammar school experiences.

I don't remember a great deal more. I do remember when we used to see the signs of diphtheria, scarlet fever, that you don't see any more, thanks to the advance of medicine. And the death rate was quite high. In those days, most surgery was done in the home, in the kitchen or on the kitchen table. About the only time you went to the hospital was when you were ready to die.

So I was in high school. I had problems, because of the studies; I didn't enjoy particularly the languages. I couldn't handle Latin. I couldn't handle Spanish much better. I loved history and I liked English. But instead of taking care of my education, I was truant so many times that finally I was called in to the principal and was expelled.

During the short interim—approximately a semester or less—that I was in high school, I made a great friend of a teacher named Margaret Kiley, who, incidentally, went on later to become dean of a college, a girl's college on Long Island. She is still a very close friend. She went to the principal, and promised him if he'd give me another chance, that she would see to it that the truancy would stop. Well, the principal wouldn't buy it, and I was out. Margaret Kiley and I have always kept up a correspondence, at least once every two or three years. Fantastic lady. Wonderful. Never married.

Well, I hung around town not doing much until my parents decided to send me to Peekskill Military Academy, in Peekskill, New York. I wasn't a very good student; I didn't like studying. The result was that at the end of the first semester, I was expelled again. This time I made a record. I'm the first person ever to be expelled from Peekskill in a hundred years. I can't learn yet; I learn from my ears, but if I try to read anything, through lack of education, I imagine—fifteen minutes, and I'm lost. I can't concentrate. But if you read it to me, I'll get every word of it. So that was the end of the education.

What about the discipline at this military academy? Well, the discipline was fairly severe. When you did something wrong, you were given demerits and a demerit amounted to ten minutes' marching, along with a full pack, a gun, etc., over about a hundred-foot run. That's when I got expelled. I had so many demerits that I'd have been marching yet, I guess, if I marched them all. My main problem was that I'd sneak down the fire escape at night and go down to a dog wagon, to a little town, and have a hamburger or something. I didn't do anything bad; I just didn't like confinement. They warned me two or three times, and the last time they caught me, I went home.

Was there something in my early life that made me kind of reject this type of thing? No, I don't think so; honestly, I doubt it. I wasn't bad. I never did anything bad. But I just didn't like to be told what to do and the minute I was supposed to it. I have to feel that I want to do it, and then I can do it. But when I'm told that I have to do it, I don't like it. Maybe I never hurt anybody. I never was a hoodlum. I just didn't like school. Parts of it I did.

Well, you've always done some bad things. There was a little Jewish fellow in the school, and I didn't know why I got picking on him. I was a pretty good athlete. I kept insulting this boy until finally he said, "Norm, if you don't leave me alone, we're going to have a fight." Well, this to rite was the funniest crack I had ever heard, because I thought I'd kill him. So we went down to the athletic field. The whole school—a hundred and fifty or two hundred of them—made a ring, and we went at it. Well, this kid, he couldn't knock me out, but he sure cut me to ribbons. I remember the last thing I did. I finally couldn't get up any more so I bit him on the leg. I took the beating of my life. So there I learned a lesson; mind your own business; don't pick upon people until you are sure you can handle them. There were a great many Panamanian boys there that I've kept up correspondence with. In fact, the present President of Panama was one of the kids that went to Peekskill. So that was the end of that. I came home, much to the disgust of my parents, for which I certainly don't blame them.

My father put me to work in this meat and produce company they had, in the boning kitchen, making frankfurters and sausage and bologna. And this I hated even worse than school, particularly in the winter, because it was cold as the devil, wet and soggy, and I never did like to do things with my hands.

There was a machine called a “silent cutter,” which chopped the meat into very fine pieces to make frankfurters and bologna out of, and this man slipped on the greasy floor and slid into it and it took his arm off right near the shoulder. It really rocked me. Of course, my father knew about it. I didn’t say much to him.

So I decided to join a carnival, and this really is an education. It’s fantastic, the things you learn at a carnival. We did everything—I remember even, once, we put on rubber busts and danced a cooch dance—and on down to racing automobiles. The great education that I had, in the carnivals, was most of your booths, as you call them—we called them “spots”—were from twelve to fifteen feet. You’d go to these county fairs and you’d rent, an average, to about forty dollars a foot. So let’s say you had ten feet; you’d get two or three days. We used all kinds of gimmicks and gadgets to lure the people in; most of the games were fixed so they couldn’t win.

The education came out in seeing hundreds and hundreds of people passing by your little ten or fifteen feet and being able to judge the person that might play your game. So you’re pitching or barking all the time, but you’re concentrating on a person. The older man that I worked with taught me how by saying, “Well, Norm, we’ll get him.” And nine out of ten times he was right. So then, in the season that I worked at it, I got so that I could do it pretty well. You don’t waste your voice or waste your effort. You get them over to the counter. Then, if I have a man, my partner keeps quiet; if my partner has a man, I keep quiet. Well, you work him over and sometimes you get a dollar or two dollars. I’ve got, sometimes, fifteen hundred dollars out of them—one player.

We used watches as a gaff. Only one of them had any works on them. After the thing

at night had closed, we’d all gather around, and anyone that lost a prize was really kidded. You weren’t supposed to lose them. But it was really quite an education.

My father of course, was trying to find me. I was working in Brockton, Massachusetts. We had a little gadget where I’d sit up on the counter blindfolded, and my partner would say, “What color suit does that man have?”

And I’d say, “A brown suit.”

“Well, what’s the color of his hat?”

“It’s a gray hat.” And it was done with a little simple code. While I was calling off my shots, all of a sudden I landed on the ground about ten feet off from the counter. My father finally found me.

So that was the end of the carnival. He took me back home, getting more disgusted with me all the time. God knows I don’t blame him. But I wouldn’t go to work back in the shop. I told him that I couldn’t stand it.

So I went to work, lying a little about my age and getting a license, driving an ice cream truck. This was quite hard work. In those days, they delivered ice cream to the stores or to the houses in tubs of ice. Sometimes a school, as an example, would be having an affair, and you’d have to take these darn tubs up the fire escapes—up maybe three or four floors. They weighed three or four hundred pounds, and you had to rock them. You know; you rock them up, and rock them back. Then on Sundays, gee, you’d have maybe a hundred and fifty tubs of quarts and pints; you knew that those were going to private homes. You’d start out about three or four o’clock in the morning, and you had to wind up before lunch. So everything had to be done on Sunday on a dead run. So that darn salt—you know they used to keep the ice cold—that would eat into the palms on the bottom of your hands and feet, and you were certainly a mess. Your skin sort of looked as though you had smallpox.

I switched from that to driving a truck from Boston to New York—an old Mack truck with hard rubber tires. In those days, you know, the roads were not paved; they were all corduroy. And the wheels on those trucks, gee, they must have been three or four feet across. There would be two drivers. You would drive three or four hours, and then you'd pull out and let him drive three or four hours. We were carrying produce—perishables—so we had to run right through. We get around eighteen bucks a week, I think. Not very heavy pay.

Coming back to Massachusetts, where my great-grandparents and grandmother—whom I adored—lived, I went to work in the silk mills, first to learn to be a weaver, which, again, I didn't like because I didn't like working with my hands. So I went to the shipping department. I got fired from that. I forget the reason.

Then I went over as a twister in the cotton mills. A twister's job is; when the cotton comes down to make the first twist, which eventually winds into the thread—it's just soft cotton—you have eighty spindles to a machine, as I remember. When one of the feeders broke, then you'd go over and take another spindle, hold it against your stomach, and press it against the spindle until you hooked it on again and got it running again. We used to come of f shift—that was twelve hours a day, payable in scrip. When you come off shift, particularly in the summertime, you looked like a new-born duck because you worked stripped those days, you know, the roads were not paved; they were all corduroy. And the wheels on those trucks, gee, they must have been three or four feet across. There would be two drivers. You would drive three or four hours, and then you'd pull out and let him drive three or four hours. We were carrying produce—perishables—so

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Then I went over and went into work in the silk mills. They brought in some groups that were going to show them how to run the Corticelli silk mill—what you'd call efficiency experts. So I was working there with a slide-rule, and I still can't read one. So it took about six months and they broke Corticelli, the experts. I was on as an employee.

So then I went to work in a greenhouse. And boy, that's something. You start little plants, you know, and about every two weeks, you move them; you hit them on the edge of the counter and you drop out a little more dirt and put them in a larger pot.

So I was changing pots all day long; and if I wasn't doing that, I was sifting ashes from the stoves that heated the greenhouses. It was kind of interesting, though, to see the way they held the Easter lilies back, so that they wouldn't bloom until Easter. This is all done with temperature and humidity. I rather enjoyed that. That was about the end of my experiences in Massachusetts, the jobs that I remember. I guess there was some more. I was just wandering from pillar to post.

Went back to Bridgeport. I decided I'll get married. This was a bright idea. I was about seventeen, maybe. So I did. I married a little girl that I had gone to school with. She was working in New York. By that time, I had moved to New York. She was working as a showgirl in the old Hippodrome theater down on 41st Street. And I had just started to work, ice-skating instructing, professional ice skating. This really infuriated my parents, together with hers, so there was a great deal of animosity between my parents and her parents. We were living up in a little furnished room on 68th Street right under the Elevated—a bit noisy—really not doing very well, neither one of us very happy, so my wife decided she would go home. So that was the end of that wedding, by which I had one child.

When that broke up, I went down to the rink, and we used to go down to a Swedish restaurant every night, get Swedish beef steak, drink tons of coffee. I had a friend named Harry Swanson. I asked Harry if he had ever been far from New York, outside of coming from Sweden. He had made one trip to California on Mr. Edward L. Doheny's yacht, as a steward, I believe. So he intrigued me with the idea of going to California, so we decided to go. We slept in an upper double, a tourist upper, in fact. That was the cheapest

transportation we could get. In those days on the Santa Fe they didn't have diners, you know; they stopped for their meals, family type meals. You could eat all you wanted and we gave it a pretty fair play.

We got in to Los Angeles; we had about fourteen dollars left, I think fourteen or sixteen dollars, and I was beginning to get a few qualms about this. Maybe along the line I was making a few mistakes, because I knew now I was a long ways from home. Well, we moved into a little one-room apartment that had a gas range in it that you could cook a little—at least make coffee, or go down and get a few eggs and make a sandwich or something. And knowing no one.

There used to be employment agencies in those days. The best one was called Murray and Ready. They had all these jobs on a blackboard, and you'd go down see a job you wanted; it might be dishwashing or fry cook—I could cook a little bit—any menial job. These were generally day jobs. And you would pay Murray and Ready ten cents for the job. So I drove truck, I cooked, I washed dishes, swept up dance halls, and it went on and on and on—I don't remember. But we had no ambition.

Now there were four of us living there—two more Swedes we picked up, outside of Swanson. He didn't care. We played pinochle to see who'd go out and get the job the next day. That would feed the four of us. Played pinochle that night to see who would get the next job. And lots of times there were little signs in windows, "dishwasher wanted," or "waiter wanted," you know.

One day down at Murray and Ready, I ran into a boy named Red Wilson, who I mentioned before as cutting himself in on my paper business. He didn't have any place to sleep, so we brought him home. Well,

he started telling me about his fabulously wealthy grandfather in Seattle, who had these gold mines in Alaska. So I now envisioned that I could go up for a month and get a barrel of gold, go home and visit the folks, and show them how rich I was.

So we got together, say, twenty dollars (I forget, not very much), and went down and bought a lot of camping clothes, sort of—walking boots and the rest of it—shipped our clothes up, collect, to Red's grandfather, and started hitchhiking. Along about Santa Barbara, a man by the name of William Neal picked us up—he was a very charming man—and he took us all the way into San Francisco and down to the ferry, and said if we ever came back to drop around and see him. Well, we made it to Seattle. When we got to Seattle, we had just one ten-cent piece left. We had the grandfather's address so we got on a streetcar. Red went in, the fare was six cents, so we had to get off. We made a long, long walk, I forget how far, but it seemed an awful long ways.

Well, Red got out there and found out his grandfather was senile, desperately poor, was being more or less supported by a woman he married (who would be a step-grandmother of Red's), who had no feeling for Red. We came in and got a rather cool welcome, and were asked where we were going to have our supper or lunch, whatever it was; they could not afford to feed us.

We started walking back to Seattle, and we saw a shingle factory over there to the side and it was closed. So I said, "Red, that might be a pretty good place to sleep. Those shingles ought to be soft, and those bundles." So we went in the shingle factory and spent the night. The next day, we went downtown—and the only thing we had left, we still had the dime—so we bought a couple of cups of

coffee and two doughnuts, which you got then for a nickel.

I had a silver cigarette case—that's all I had. Of course, we had no clothes because we'd shipped them up collect, and now we had no way to get them so we lost our clothes. We either traded the cigarette case, or we hocked it—I forget which—for a couple pairs of dungarees and a couple of sweat shirts.

Then we went down on the docks, going along the ships, we were going to eat, anyway. So we both hired on to the H. F. Alexander—which in those days was the fastest ship afloat—as wipers. A wiper goes around and cleans up the floors with detergents—such as they had in those days—polishes the brass, and cleans out the bilge, and does all the dirty work in the black gang (the black gang is down in the engine room)

Crew's quarters, I'll never forget, were four bunks high, with ladders to get up to them. You didn't sleep much because of some Filipino playing a guitar, or a crap game going on, or something. Anyway, it was never quiet because they were changing shifts all the time. You know, they were either going to bed or getting up.

So one day I was up polishing the brass on the bridge. The engineer came along and smeared it all up—shining the swinging wheels. Another one came along with him and they got to talking about bridge. I was down cleaning the floor and polishing the brass. They said, "Too bad we don't have a fourth."

I spoke up to the engineer, I said, "I know how to play bridge." (In those days there weren't many people who knew how to play bridge; it was just overcoming whist.)

They said, "Well, you work eight on and four off; that don't work out for a bridge game." They said, "Tell you what we're gonna

do, kid; we're gonna advance you to fireman, because firemen work four on and eight off." And this gave time to play bridge!

The H. F. used to sail from Seattle to San Diego, two trips, and then over to Honolulu. That's the first time I saw Honolulu, which, as I remember, was about 1922. And it really was a charming place. Most of, well, practically all of what Waikiki Beach today is, were watercress farms, poi farms. There was one hotel out there, the Moana, but in between, it was all swamp. We had a lot of fun there. got out on a party one night and met Mr. Walter Dillingham, who was one of the kings of Hawaii. He took a liking to us and took us out to his ranch where he had a lot of beautiful horses and cattle. We had quite a time—darn' near missed the boat coming back. When we came back—I think it was that trip—we got into San Francisco, and Red had been in a fight with one of the officers. I was afraid we were going to get fired. There was a stevedore strike going on there. So I just felt we better quit before we got fired.

Then we signed on with the stevedore strike. I remember the man's name was "Black Jack" Malone; he ran the strike. But anyway, for stevedoring or longshoring we were getting a dollar and a half an hour for the first eight hours, a dollar and a half for the second four, and two dollars for the third four. If you didn't have anything to do, you didn't dare leave the dock, because across the way on the Embarcadero there were about two hundred men lined up with rifles—the strikers—and you couldn't get off. So we used to work for sixteen hours a day, sometimes eighteen. And this, you see, amounted to twenty, twenty-four, twenty-five dollars a day. So at the end of six weeks, I was rich.

We got off the dock at the end of the strike, and moved. First I went up and bought some clothes, because I still had those

dungarees and a sweatshirt—that's all I had; a few other things we picked up, you know, but nothing very much. So I went up, got some nice clothes. I had, I think, around twenty-two hundred, twenty-five hundred dollars. I checked into the Saint Francis Hotel, and then looked up my friend Neal, who, as you remember, I told you had picked us up when we were hitchhiking.

He was a widower, a charming man, and he had the western states representation of the Rubber Set Brush Company. So he remembered us, wondered what we were doing. I said I'd saved a little money, but would like a job. So he put Red to work in the stockroom, and he said, "I'll train you selling brushes." He asked where we were living. I said, "I am living in the Saint Francis temporarily, but of course, I can't stay there very long. I just thought I'd have a week of relaxation, pleasure and fun." He got a great kick out of it. He said, "Well, I'm a widower, I live up on Bush Street. Why don't you boys move in with me?"

He had already learned that I could do a fair job of cooking—nothing fancy, but I could make a pretty good meal. So we moved in with Mr. Neal.

He put me on the road with a man named Guy Banta. Banta and I used to travel from San Francisco, down to Los Angeles, over to Phoenix, and to El Paso, into Denver, Salt Lake, Butte, Montana; Spokane, Tacoma, Seattle, Portland, back to San Francisco, selling brushes. We sold to the wholesale trade, not retail. We had a very fine line of shaving brushes. I remember I hit Reno once, and sold Lester J. Hilp—stepped out of the car and was in mud up to my ankles on Virginia Street! So we used to make that trip.

Of course, in those days none of those roads, oh, I'd say there wasn't twenty miles of that whole trip that was paved. They were not only dirt roads, they were dust roads.

Particularly crossing the Arizona country, if a road got rutted too deep, you just moved out in the sagebrush and made another road. I guess there were a hundred roads going across the Arizona desert! We used to try to travel a great deal at night, and to keep ourselves awake, we'd try to kill jackrabbits.

I'll never forget, I think it was in either Phoenix or a town above it in Arizona, in one night; business had been no good—lousy—and I was cursing the trade, and cursing the damned fools that owned the drugstores and the hardware stores, and the rest of them. And old Banta said, "Norman, I'm going to tell you something. When you go to bed tonight, you get down on your knees, and you look up to that guy in the sky, and you just thank God there is a lot of dumb people in the world, or you and I'd be working a damn sight harder than we are!" And I have never forgotten the expression. I've never called anybody dumb since.

I think the third or the fourth loop that we made—during this time Banta had been talking all the time about starting our own company—I was then close to twenty years old—he enthralled me with the idea that we could become manufacturer's representatives. He knew I had about eighteen hundred left, I think, and he had about twelve, as I remember. But anyway, we decided we'd do this. So I quit Mr. Neal, which upset him quite a bit. I was always rather embarrassed doing it, but I wanted to do better than I ever could selling brushes.

So we went to New York, and we lined up these different firms, to represent them on the West coast. And then we rented a store—a loft really—565 Market Street. Banta was pretty handy with his hands and with tools. We built our little booth, and we painted it, and we dolled it up, and we went into business. And it was fantastically successful.

We used to sell perfumes and to s and hospital supplies, cotton, costume jewelry—you name it, e had it. Drugs. Gosh, we had over five hundred items. And we had all the territory from Denver westward—all the territory I just explained to you—eleven western state . We had some very hot lines, one was Caron perfume, and one was a hospital cotton. They had just brought out cot on in one-pound rolls, and we were the first to have it. This was very good in hospitals, you know, rather than the little ones. We did very well with that, and we did very w 11 with the toys. Well anyway, in less than a year, we m de two hundred thousand dollars. And we had by then, eighty or ninety salesmen working for us.

I was on the road all the time, and Banta took care of the store, the shop, and the customers that came in. And we used to borrow money, because there would be a lag between the time we got the material and the time we collected for it. So we had a line of credit over a the Wells Fargo Bank. I used to sign books of checks before I left—maybe I'd sign a thousand checks—because I'd be one a month or six weeks on these trips. So we were pretty cocky, pretty proud of ourselves, but unbeknown to me, my partner, Banta, was a horse player.

I came in one trip and noticed something was wrong. So he broke down and told what he'd done. He'd not only lost our money, but we owed the bank \$100,000. Just before I left on that trip I'd sent for my mother to come out, because I thought I was home, you know, I thought I had it made. So we went over to the bank. He'd falsified records, and we were due for the penitentiary.

I got hold of a lawyer whom I met; I think his name was Edwin McKenzie—a great big tough Irishman. Told him what position I was in. In the course of the conversation, he asked me, "Norm, how old are you?"

I said, "Well, a little over twenty."

"Well," he said, "did you have your parents' consent to establish this line of credit, etc.?"

"No

"He said, "Well, then, they can't hold you liable."

So we went back to the Wells Fargo Bank. (Incidentally, the banker's name was Banta, the same as my partner.) My lawyer talked it over with him, and the banker agreed that he couldn't hold me. But my partner went to San Quentin.

I promised that banker that some way, some day, I'd pay off my portion of that debt. It took me six years, but I paid it off, and it was one of the smartest things I ever did, because my credit from then on has been—all I have to do is go to Wells Fargo, they go back to my records, say 1922, '23 whatever it was.

So here I am broke again. When my mother had arrived, I might have had \$150.00, or something. A little apartment we had down on Sutter Street. So I ran into a friend of mine, who said he could get me a job down in Los Angeles, selling stocks and bonds. So we went down. We had a little Star automobile that really was a hunk of junk, but we made it. And I went to work for a firm called Bond, Goodwin and Tucker. Bond, Goodwin was an old Boston bond house and Tucker was a California bond house. They gave me \$125.00 a month while I was training. When I finished my training, it was just the time that stocks were becoming more popular than bonds and this company, Bond, Goodwin and Tucker, had a deal where they had taken over an old company called United Oil, and they were putting out an issue called Richfield Oil, which was the first public offering of Richfield Oil. I'm on the telephone talking to some widow, advising her to sell her South American bonds, which later

proved to be worthless, and buy this Richfield Oil, because I was more stock-minded than bond-minded. But unfortunately, the sales manager was the opposite! He didn't like this stock business. Well, he heard me making this pitch over the telephone, called me in the office when I'd finished, and he said, "Who were you talking to?"

I told him. "Where'd you get the name?" I said, "I got it off the list." They had a list of all their customers, and they'd allocate certain names to certain salesmen when you're first starting out, so you can build up a clientele.

He said, "Well that was a disgraceful performance you gave, advising that woman to sell good bonds for questionable stock. We don't want your kind around here, so just draw your check." So here I am, gone again! I had saved a few bucks. I still believed in stocks instead of bonds.

And funny thing—I guess it was fifteen years later, the sales manager, I ran into him on Montgomery Street in San Francisco. He grabbed me by the shoulder and he said, "Aren't you Norm Biltz?"

And I said, "Yeah."

lie said, "Don't you remember me?"

I said, "No, I'm sorry, I don't."

He said, "Well, remember when I fired you from Bond, Goodwin and Tucker? Now I have to apologize. I wish you'd switched all the clients out of those lousy South American bonds!" We still see each other occasionally. I can't think of his name right now; he has a small investment house.

So during the time I was with Bond, Goodwin, although it was a short length of time, I had carried out my practice that I have all my life, of trying to meet important people and know them and try to do them a favor; and then I've got one coming in return.

So I went to New York through some contacts I had made, and I went to work in

Wall Street, not as a broker, but as a salesman. In those days they had jiggles; you know, you'd run a stock up or knock it down, depending upon who you were working for and what you were doing. And I became very well acquainted with Fred Fisher, of Fisher Motors, Fisher Body; he was then in General Motors, and his brother Larry and his other brother, Chick. And I got to, well, be sort of a flunky for them, I guess you'd call it. There was a lot of telephoning to do then, to call people in Chicago or Los Angeles, or whatever, to buy stock or sell this stock, or whatever it was. I'd do that, then I'd take them out at night, arrange for their table, their pleasure, whatever it might happen to be. And I got quite an education in Wall Street, working down at Ira Haupt (who incidentally just went broke in this vegetable oil thing, a couple of years ago). Got quite an education.

I kind of missed the West. Things were getting pretty hot back there. Of course, you didn't have SEC rules then, and there were quite some manipulations going on, I can assure you, with some pretty big people.

Anyway, I told Fred I thought I'd go west; I'd made a trip to Florida with him. He had a beautiful yacht, but Fred got seasick if he saw a sailor's hat, and his captain was worse than he was. So the crew would take the yacht down and park it on a causeway at Miami Beach, and we'd go down by train and get the yacht. But the yacht never left the dock! In fact, I was on the yacht several times later and I never did feel the engines going; I don't know whether they ran or not! So I came back west and started selling stocks again out of San Francisco.

Then I decided I'd get a divorce. My wife hadn't heard from me in nine years; she didn't know where I was, damned unattractive. I was just bouncing around, that's all. So I came up to Lake Tahoe then.

In 1929 at Cal Neva, I ran into a gal who rented one of our houses and became enamoured, decided we might get married. She was a very well-known girl, socially, in New York. Reasonable wealth—a lot more than I had. So I went east, met her family. She had a wonderful old aunt, Aunt Annie Burr Jennings. And Aunt Annie said, "You know, my niece has been west. She has probably become enamoured with it, and, quite obviously with you. She's just gone through an unpleasant experience of divorce. So why don't you wait a year, and be sure you both know what you want," which we did. We've been married thirty-seven years now.

Well, that was something. And here comes the change in Biltz, because my wife had three beautiful children and this staying up until two or three o'clock in the morning had to stop. I had to take on the responsibility of trying to be a good step-father, with hopes of our having a family of our own. I really had to work myself over pretty well, and change faces and hats. But it wasn't hard; it was a pleasure. Just think back, how we spent our honeymoon.... My wife was used to a great deal more than I could give her. had a two-room cabin up at Tahoe—a bedroom and a combination living room, dining room and kitchen. She'd never cooked in her life; she didn't know how to boil water. We always loved her for it. She said, "Well, here's the way we'll run it. I have the three children, so I'm going to pay two-thirds of the bill, and you pay one-third. And we'll live on it." And we did. There were a lot of rough times in there, and she never quibbled. And I paid my one one-third. It was 1930, and I really worked. We had two children. One thing I wanted to contribute to those children, because I had so little, due to the fact that their grandmother set up a trust for them that took out any possibility of being of any financial aid to

them, which is sort of upsetting because you do like to do something, and not being able to, at this time, give them any social advantages, and about the only thing that I could see that I could do would be, in effect, to make them love me and to make connections everywhere and anywhere I could that I thought would be advantageous to their business or married lives, later. And I really worked hard at this, and I did make a lot of friends, and they have been of assistance, great assistance in some instances. This was about the only contribution I could make, plus keeping myself clean, keeping myself away from past associates, or some of them at least. I quit gambling, and greatly retarded my drinking. I worked my tail off, I'll tell you that. The days were long; my wife was cooperative, although she felt that it wasn't worth it—well, to her it wasn't, but to me it was. She didn't interfere; she was sometimes kind of critical when the hours were late. I remember one instance I still giggle at. I called her up that I was going to be late, and this always upset her—which she was right. I got home about half past nine at night. never put my wife Esther in business deals, except very rarely, and more in the latter days. I went into a rank gamble on a uranium property in Utah, with Mr. Cord. I told my wife, "If you want to take a gamble, this is a thousand to one shot, but it might hit."

So she said, "Well, tell me how much you want me to put in, and I'll write a check." She never questioned.

I said, "Well, this will be a big bet; it will be \$5,000."

Well, she said, "That isn't very serious is it?" We sold that property. The night I came home at nine thirty I was damned tired. We'd completed a transaction and her \$5,000, I had made her \$650,000.

When we were first married, her mother lived in New York, and we used to go back and forth. I spent a few months in New York, Connecticut, each year until her mother died. This sort of broke up some things I had going here, but I fiddled around New York in the brokerage business, trading securities. In those days, you know, when I first started and our children were little, we traveled with a nurse and a chauffeur. The train was very slow; I forget what it was, but it seems to me it was four or five days crossing the country. We had to carry the formula for the babies' milk—you know this formula, and we had to carry that in a little ice box—and every time we stopped I'd have to run like hell to get the express train. We had a couple of dogs, so I had to run the dogs, and get the ice in. Little Johnny, one of my stepsons, had a canary; it kept getting loose. If I wasn't chasing dogs or canaries, I was chasing ice. We carried about twenty-five, thirty pieces of luggage, with all the kids, five of them. Boy, moving across town Chicago, this was a major feat! I needed about five porters to get them all separated, get them in the right rooms. I'd generally take two of the boys in with me in the drawing room, and Esther would take a couple in with her.

We lived then for awhile on Gracie Square. Both of my daughters by Esther were born in New York. I was, to the family, sort of looked upon as a rough character, tough, hardboiled, I guess. I have a brother-in-law whom I am terribly fond of, named Wilmarth Lewis. And he is a great student, a collector. I remember we were playing backgammon over at the apartment on Gracie Square, and I looked up and my wife Esther said, "Come on, we better get going."

I said, "Where?"

She said, "Well, we better get to the hospital"—Doctors Hospital was only a

block away. She said, “We better get there, and get there quick.”

Well, when I get upset or anything, I get scared to death. I got sick to my stomach. This very learned brother-in-law of mine looked at me somewhat in disgust, because the big tough guy wasn’t tough at all. I was frightened to death.

Well, then as time went on, I realized that the properties in the Crystal Bay Development Company weren’t producing what I wanted. So we decided to move into Reno.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS: REAL ESTATE, MINING, INDUSTRIAL

To go back a bit, the Cal-Neva was opened in May of 1927, and as I remember, I got there during that month, or maybe early June. I'd saved up a little money; I had a few thousand dollars, but I got gambling. So it didn't take long; here I am broke again. Not only broke, but I had written some checks I couldn't cover.

The man whose name was Bob Sherman built the Cal-Neva lodge as a guest house, so it wasn't open to the public. It was where they took prospects to sell real estate to. Sherman had developed what is now known as Tahoe Vista, and Brockway Vista, and Lake Vista, and Nevada Vista, and was just putting in the golf course at Brockway. There wasn't a house with the exception of Brockway, which in those days was more of a fishing camp, you know. There were about forty professional fisherman, and you'd go up there fishing. Then you went all the way down to Tahoe Vista, which had a little fishing place. Then you went all the way to Carnelian Bay. And then you went all the way to Tahoe City. There wasn't a house in between that area; nothing.

We had built one little shack at Kings Beach; we built it in that.

So owing Sherman this money, I went to work. And that winter, he took a liking to me. I went to work then selling a lot of properties he had in Southern California. I remember we sold what is now Holmby Hills and Westwood, to a man named Letts, who owned the Broadway department store. I sold him, as I remember, around fifteen or twenty thousand acres, for forty dollars an acre. And Sherman was so proud of me, getting that big price—he was only dry grain farming then—that he threw a big dinner—very flattering to me—bright young man.

Then we subdivided the beach at Santa Monica, and Lake Elsinore, and Playa Del Rey. Then we had a farming deal going on up in Williams, California. Bob was beginning to give me more authority. So when we went back to Tahoe in the spring of 1928, he made me more or less sales manager.

It might be interesting—we had, gee, I don't know, thirty, 40,000 lots, I guess, drawn

out on paper; we used to sell them off the map. We had what they call flat stores, in San Francisco and we had them in Fresno and Bakersfield—all over the state of California. We'd have lunch sometimes, with lectures every half hour. We'd get people in there and then we'd show them photographs of the lake and sell them with a low down, and pay for their ticket to Tahoe. The only way to get there then with any degree of time or safety was by train. The train ran right into Tahoe City. And then we'd get them up there and maybe they'd buy a 350- or 400-dollar lot that would be probably half way to Truckee. Then we'd step them up; you know—better property. I remember that year we sold 17,000 lots up at Lake Tahoe. This was great until the depression came, and then we got it all back!

During that time, Sherman conceived the idea—there was a very tough tax law in California, known as the 3.47 Act, which meant that your securities and your cash were taxed 3.47 percent, which was very, very heavy. So Mr. Sherman put me to work with Thatcher and Woodburn, who were his lawyers, and George Springmeyer and Lou Biddle and Pat McCarran—that was the first time I ever met Senator McCarran. We went down to Carson—Governor Balzar was then governor—and explained our thoughts that we could move these wealthy people in, which would be an asset to the state. Balzar was a very, very fine man. He understood it; he thought it sound. In fact, he gave us a letter pretty much to the effect that he was sure we would state the advantageous tax laws of Nevada honestly, but if we made a mistake, he would attempt to make it fit our mistake. He was that kind of a guy.

So we went to work. The first prospect we had was Jim Stack, who had retired at a very early age from very early age from very large stock holdings in Quaker Oats. So we brought

Jim up to Lake Tahoe—it was in early June, as I remember—and we had couple of rooms open in the Brockway Hotel. Then we were going to drive over to the property which is where his house is now, about three quarters of a mile, I guess, from the Brockway Hotel.

So what happens? We get a snowstorm—about eight inches of snow—and we can't move. And we need this sale so bad. We're all pretty short. By this time Sherman had started to get in trouble financially. So what the hell are we going to do now? So I looked at that terrain; it was sort of down in front of where the Cal Neva is, along the beach where Eddie Hill's was. The Buck family, in those days, owned it. I thought, "Well, by God, I can carry him over there," because Jim had had a stroke and was partially paralyzed on the left side. I guess he weighed about 175, 180, but I know he was awful heavy on the way back. I said, "Jim, get up on my back. By God, we've come all this way together to see this property!" So I packed him over there, and packed him back. We sold him \$50,000 worth of property that day, which was a big sale in those days, because it was cash. The others were "nothing down and catch me," you know.

So Jim was the first one. Then among the others was Bob Flick, and Major Fleischmann and E. L. Cord, some sixty or seventy of them we brought in. That continued through, oh, I think I branched out in other things about 1933 or '4 (these dates can be wrong).

When we first got started in moving these wealthy men into Nevada for the various advantageous laws, it was quite normal that their attorneys in other states weren't too happy to see this happen, because they were looking forward to the handling of their estates and their wills and the rest of it. So we had to be very, very thoroughly prepared. We would gather every bit of information we could on the individual, and his family,

attorney—everything else you can think of—before we ever contacted him. So we were very well-prepared. Some of these, I know I worked on two or three months, just picking up everything I could get. We purchased a list of millionaires over the nation that were supposedly worth \$20,000,000 or more. We put out a magazine called *Nevada, the Last Frontier*.^{*} And we mailed them, but in mailing them we would have a leather binder made with their name on them and the rest, so it wouldn't land in the waste-paper basket, at least until they had read it. Then we would follow this up with a call. And then we found when they came in, they were ready.

Nevada, of course, was a very small state then. I remember, I think, one of those years, Sierra Pacific Power Company was very proud to make \$20,000. So you can see how small it was. Another little maybe interesting thing—the telephone book at Lake Tahoe was three pages.

So we found then that we had to go further than just to bring them in and drop them. So we had to start a construction company, which we did, called Sierra Construction, to build houses in the manner that they wanted them built. We found servants for them; we catered to them in every possible way. I know with Jim Stack, I lived with him for six months, solidifying the association making him feel that it was only advantageous to live in Nevada. And we really worked very, very hard on that. Taking them shooting, fishing—you name it, we did it—with the result that these people became salesmen for us, because they went back to Chicago or California or Oregon, or wherever, Philadelphia. They were selling the state, not only as to the advantages they were saving by the laws, but by the fun they were having. And we did. We spent many, many an hour, day, week, and month, keeping them laughing, playing golf with them and

letting them beat us. You name it, we did it. And it was a fantastic experience.

Now the outcome of that, and the associations and friendships that we made—and believe me, I feel that we earned—it gave us contact with very large sums of money. And as these people continued to have confidence in us, we were to—any reasonable sum of money, we could raise. Raise it; I've raised fifteen, twenty million on the telephone. And we were always darn' careful to see that they made money.

Of course, we had an expanding community (we're now heading into 1933). The banks were all closed. Properties were being almost given away in liquidation, which was a bitter crime, because if Mr. Wingfield had been given the slightest opportunity, those banks would have paid off one hundred percent. I know that, because I worked on them. But here were cattle that had to be sold for debts. Most of the ranchers were in a very bad economic condition.

I remember, as an example, the First National Bank at Second and Virginia, which Mr. Wingfield had spent \$200,000 on remodeling just a year before, or possibly two years before. That was sold; building, bank and all, for \$140,000. The Medico-Dental building was sold for about \$45,000. The Lyon building which now has another name—Professional Building—was sold for around \$50,000. Land was going for... well, Mr. Redfield bought 40,000 acres, which runs from here to Tahoe and back down to Verdi, for one dollar an acre—\$40,000. And it was leased out at that time to sheep men for ten cents an acre. But nobody had any money.

So we started to move the money into a lot of these properties. One as an example,

^{*}Copy in Nevada and the West Collection, University of Nevada Library.

is where the Catholic school is down here, where the University Farm is. Do you know which one I mean? Well, see, Bob Flick was one of our boys. We sold that to Flick. I think if you remember, he did a great job of building that up. He built that lovely house, which we built for him. And Dean Witter bought part of the famous Dunphy ranch. During that period, we sold and rehabilitated, I'd say, ninety percent of the ranches on the Humboldt River, and probably sixty percent on the Carson River. On the Carson River, of course, Minden and Gardnerville didn't get in the bad trouble that the big ranchers were, in Elko County. (See, that was the Henderson bank in Elko County that went broke with the Wingfield banks. And they had mortgages on about eighty percent of the ranches.) And Fernley was badly hurt. Lovelock was in a disastrous condition. And these people, with the funds available to them, and the funds they had themselves, why they rehabilitated and they restocked these ranches. And today it's sort of a thrill to drive that Humboldt River area and see it today selling at prices that are probably two and three hundred times what we originally sold them for.

And so they brought an economy to a little city. I'd say that in 1930, well, Reno would be about 20,000 people, I would think. That's pretty small. And our carpenters were getting work, and truckers were getting work, and building material people were getting work, and people were coming into town in the hotels. It really was the beginning of the turn-around. (Just as I feel the phasing out of Stead Air Base was the beginning of the distressed period we are now coming out of.) So now we're up to '33.

Going back to early Tahoe, Harry Comstock was one of the principal stockholders of the company I worked for with Bob Sherman. Now he owned most of

it. And Sherman acquired some more, and the corporation was then Harry Comstock and Spencer Grant and Bob Sherman; those were the principal stockholders.

Joe King had a bootleg joint over in Truckee. He was partners with a man named Dick Joseph. Together with that, Joe had a slot machine route, the largest place being Meeks Bay. Then he went over to Donner Lake. He used to be fun; I'd go with him, and when he'd opened the slot machines, he'd figure what it cost him to live for the next week. He'd give me the balance for buying lots. And those little cabins that are there, at Kings Beach now, at the resort, we built for him—a room and a bath for \$160.00 apiece. And when the so-called depression came, all those lots were under what was known as the Matoon Act in those days. This was where you issued bonds for the improvements, primarily the road improvements. So these lots came back on us by the thousands. And the taxes, of course, went on, and also the payment on the bonds. And the company didn't have the money. So we sold lots at Kings Beach, oh, as low as six dollars apiece. I know I had a caretaker, Jay Vork, at my house, so I sold him one hundred lots at six dollars apiece—six hundred dollars—because it was impossible to pay the taxes and the bond interest on it. And 8- 10,000 lots, I guess we got back. Well, about five years later, Jay sold them for \$1,000 apiece. And I lost my caretaker, needless to say. He retired.

In competition, we didn't really have any competition, because we owned and controlled the whole area. The competition, if it could be called competition, were the smaller individual real estate brokers who picked them up off the road; they didn't do advertising and they didn't bring them up by train loads. Most of that activity was over on the California side, the other side of Truckee.

There was, to my memory, no activity on the Nevada side at all. I know there was none on the Nevada side. A few years later, Cave Rock was opened up by Ed Malley, of the Cave Rock area. He was an associate of Arthur Bourne's. That was after I was pretty well out of Tahoe, that is after the big operation collapsed, we just ran out of gas.

Harry Comstock originally worked for Lucky Baldwin. As I said before, when I went there, the Brockway hotel was primarily a fishing resort. They had, I guess, forty or fifty boats and fishermen. He had all this land which he acquired at a very low price, and put it into the Sherman organization.

I do remember one sort of an amusing thing. There was a squatter by the name of Bud Mandeville, and he squatted on some land down near Tahoe Vista. They were a rather interesting family; they had four or five boys and they'd steal anything that wasn't nailed down, particularly during the winter. So we finally figured out a scheme, and we hired old man Mandeville as a caretaker at Brockway. And we got him a badge—it was a phony badge, but he thought it was a sheriff's badge. This stopped all the stealing. I think we paid him something like sixty or seventy dollars a month. And, well, you'd go up there in the fall and all of a sudden, some fellow would jump out from behind a tree with a straw hat on. He had all kinds of disguises, you know. He really took his job seriously. But the stealing stopped. And later the Mandeville boys, one up there is very successful as a builder, and one of them built the first gas station in Kings Beach, and he went on—I don't know where he went to, I think to Southern California. But the boys all turned out fine. The old man, he just thought that was his right, you know; if he needed something, he'd just go get it.

The stealing was very bad around Tahoe, and it might still be, I don't know. But I do

know that when we opened up Incline, Lester Summerfield had a house there, and a lawyer from Chicago, I forget his name, and Ronny Byrns and—I don't know, there were about ten or fifteen houses over there. They got robbed darn' near every year. But mine was never touched. This was to the great annoyance of the Chicago lawyer. In fact, he practically accused me of being in the ring! The truth was that I knew all those natives. I'd been around there and we were friends. Now, I didn't know who was doing it; I didn't have the slightest idea. It could have been one of fifty people. But they never did (knock on wood), but they never did to this day, touch my house.

But I know one man down at Carnelian—well, it was just this side of the Dollar estate—he got robbed twice. So he decided to hire a caretaker and keep him there all winter. So early in the spring, a moving van showed up, and called him by name and said his boss had sent him up, something came up, he was going to refurnish the house. This fellow helped him move all the furniture out, everything in the house, loaded the moving van and they never found it.

But oh, they'd tear out the plumbing, they'd pull out the windows; it was just unbelievable, the vandalism that went on. I think it's pretty well stopped now, because it's more built up and people that were stealing the stuff, I guess to build their own homes, are going or they've got their houses built, one or the other.

Then there was a major (whose name slips my mind now, but he was a retired army major who had a pension). Every month here he'd come with twenty, thirty, forty dollars, and buy another lot. And it got to be embarrassing because I know how many thousand lots we had to sell. And I tried to discourage this old man, he was a very fine old man. Every time he bought one—he had a two-room cabin

which he built mostly himself—he'd tie a little pine cone up on one of the rafters, you know. I used to go over and visit with him and he'd say, "Well, Norm, you know sane day we're going to start cutting those pine cones down and I'll be a rich man." Well, he used to come down when our main office then was down in San Francisco in the winter, up on Sutter Street. And he'd come in each month with his payments. I noticed he looked sort of drawn one time. I said, "Major, you don't look very well."

He said, "You know, Norman, I live out by the beach, and it's an awful long walk into town. Good Lord, it must be ten miles!"

"Well," I said, "Why do you walk?" I said, "Why don't you drive or get the bus?"

He said, "I just can't afford it."

I said, "Well, don't you think it's time you dropped a few of these lots?"

And he said, "Oh no, you're not going to get those lots away from me!" So he did arrange in the office that his payments were reduced, and the old gentleman died, never having sold a lot. In fact you couldn't—I doubt you could have bought one from him. Whatever you offered him, he thought it was worth more, you know?

And one time a lady came in; she bought a lot off the map. The salesman took her out and sold her—I don't know—five, six, seven lots we'll say, 15- \$20,000. She kept hanging around the office and pretty soon she'd go out with another salesman. Well, after I had about \$80,000 worth of her checks in one day, I thought, you know there is something wrong with this. So I took her out, and this time I didn't believe it; she picked out some more lots—gave me a check—and anyway, over the weekend, she bought \$160,000 worth of lots, and I'd 'a bet anyone ten thousand to one that when I put those checks in the bank, you know, they'd be phony. Good as gold!

And I never saw her again. To my knowledge she never came back to Tahoe again. And when I quit the organization, she still owned them to the best of my knowledge. It is just unbelievable how excited people can get.

Like yesterday, I was out to the Lear thing. I had just got back from Las Vegas, and boy, everybody hit me on the street, "Where should I buy? Where should I buy?" It's the same in Las Vegas. You get the fever pitch going, and you see some very unusual things. Later, of course, there were a lot of real estate men. After we started the Crystal Bay Development Company, which is the first subdivision outside of the Sherman organization, we ran that for several years, and then we sold it to old Ed Malley, Ed Malley, Sr. And then that was all of the operation in that entire area until Incline Village was started by Mr. Arthur Wood, etc.

I remember one amusing thing; we took a man, a San Francisco man, over, oh, about six or eight miles toward Glenbrook from Incline, where there is a series of beautiful sand coves and lovely trees that had not been cut. So he chose a piece of property—it was around \$75,000—and said he would buy it, with one qualification: that I personally guarantee that the trees wouldn't die for fifty years. Well I couldn't figure out how to do that, and he wouldn't buy it if I wouldn't! So, needless to say, I didn't sell it. Those are some of the peculiarities you run into with people. And sometimes you think you have a lot, you know, that is just a dog; nobody would want it. And here comes somebody that likes the way the rock sits over there, or the tree sits over there, or the steepness of it—all kinds of buyers. Most anything that's terra firma will sell over the years.

I will tell a little about my relationship with George Whittell. What happened, my San Francisco partner, Henry Trevor and I

could see the idea of acquiring control of the Nevada side of Lake Tahoe, which amounts to about twenty-seven miles lake-front and a hundred thousand-plus acres. In those days it was owned by the Hobart estate, which ran from Cal Neva, to a little bit behind Sand Harbor. And then the Carson Tahoe Lumber and Flume Company, which is the Bliss family, owned from there over to a little bit beyond Glenbrook. And then the Mills estate owned from there, practically over to Stateline. That included Zephyr Cove. Now the reason for those three areas of beach was that in the old days, each was a sawmill, do you see? Incline, where Glenbrook is now, and the other one—Zephyr Cove. We had a partner who we'd interested in it, a man named Walter Seligman. He was a very wealthy man from New York. And he told us to go ahead and acquire it. This was quite a chore. We finally acquired it on a basis of two dollars a front foot, two hundred feet deep, and the back acreage for one dollar an acre. We put up all the cash we had as deposits. I remember it was some seventy, eighty thousand dollars. And the balance—say, roughly two million—was due in some sixty or ninety days, I forget. So we got hold of Seligman, and he came out and he says (and he stuttered very badly), he says, "C-c-c, y-y-y—you n-n-n-know, b-boys, I've ch-changed my mind." Well, this about threw us out of our minds! So here we were. It was in the early thirties, I remember, about '33, '34, I think, and we didn't have any more money. Everything we had was in it and we couldn't close. So I went to Whittell, who was a friend of mine, to see if they were all cash transactions.

Well, Mr. Whittell taught me a very great lesson. He said, "Norm, I don't like partners; I don't want to get involved. But I tell you what I'll do; I'll put up the money. I'll give you back your sixty, seventy thousand." And he said, "Then you go ahead and subdivide it and

sell it, and when I get my money back (plus three percent interest) then you'll participate for twenty-five percent of the profits." Well, this looked like a gift from heaven to us at that time, because we had about thirty days to close. He said, "However, there are two conditions; one is that I don't want my estate involved in any joint ventures or partnerships. So you'll have to gamble that I live until you pay me back." He said, "The other is so you don't prostitute this property, you don't give it away to get me paid off, I want to have approval of any prices you sell at."

Well, we started. I remember the first one. We went to Hollywood and we got hold of Janet Gaynor, which was a good movie name in those days, and we sold her about a thousand feet, as I remember, for seventy dollars a foot. Anyway, we sold about six hundred thousand dollars worth at about seventy to eighty dollars a foot, in a period of about two months. (Oh, incidentally, I forgot. We had this drawn up; it was a hand-written agreement which we drew up at his home out of Atherton. And he signed and I approved.) He called me in and he said, "Norm, I got bad news for you."

I said, "What is it?"

He said, "You're selling the property too fast."

I said, "Well, George, you know it gets a little tiresome living up here eating pine cones until I get you paid off. Lord, I'm getting sixty, seventy, eighty dollars a foot for stuff we paid two dollars for. The profit is there."

He said, "I know, but I don't want to sell any more."

I said, "What do you mean?"

He said, "Whatever price you bring to me on the sale for approval, I'll turn down." He said, "If it's a hundred a foot, I'll turn it down; if it's two hundred a foot, I'll turn it down; if it's five hundred a foot, I'll turn it down."

I said, "Well, George, what do you mean? What am I to do?"

He says, "You just had a damn' good lesson, because I'm going to die with it."

And I was locked in. And I never got a dime. And that's how Whittell acquired the property. I didn't sell it to him. Needless to say, we didn't speak any more. One afternoon we were drinking, and Heinie was there (my partner, Henry Trevor) and we got yacking about it. I said, "You know the old son of a buck. Let's go over and spit in his eye, or do something." So I got hold of the contract—we were down in the office because we got the contract out, the hand-written agreement, and we went up there. We went in to see him. I'm not going to use the language on this tape that we used to him. We tore it up and threw it in his face, and spit in his face. Now, as it has turned out, our judgment was bad because he is selling it, and we would be getting the twenty-five percent. However, I do believe, because of the sadistic nature of this individual, that if we had kept it, I don't think he would have ever sold any. He is a very hard man. This gave him great personal pleasure, to knock us out of the pot. So you're never too old to learn a lesson!

Now he's getting—well, their court trial's on right now, you know, around five thousand acres, which he's asking six million for, and appraisals are below that. Outside of Sand Harbor, which is very, very hard to sewer, because if you get out on to the land of Sand Harbor, the center is almost a swamp, and the water table is less than two feet, and septic tanks won't work. So even if the state acquires it—which I imagine it will, in condemnation—they are going to have a major problem, in my opinion, as to how to supply the utilities, the sewer and the water and the rest of it, because sixty percent of it is maybe twenty or thirty feet off the highway,

if you remember, going toward Sand Harbor. It will be interesting to see. I know they have four appraisers in the court, because one of my boys is on the jury. And they run from two million, six, to six million, four, it's quite a spread! A piece of land that cost him well under \$75,000. Well under. I forget the exact footage. But I guess it'll make him happy. We're both eating anyway, and I have more friends than he has.

Let's see. We started the legislative work to get these tax laws changed to a point that it would be advantageous to Nevada, as well as the people moving in. In my memory, I believe that was finished in 1928. '27, or '28, I'm sure. And then Mr. Sherman got into major financial difficulties due to other subdivisions, because they all started slipping about 1926, and the contracts started to become delinquent. We were taking property back at Santa Monica. We were taking it back at Playa del Rey. We were taking it back at Williams, California. We were taking it back at Lake Elsinore and Redondo Beach. And this, Mr. Sherman couldn't stand financially. I remember walking into one of the major banks in San Francisco. We had about over \$2,000,000 worth of contracts at Lake Elsinore and we owed the bank, I remember, 200, \$250,000. So the banker was very rough. He said, "You go back to that boss of yours and...." Mr. Sherman was sort of a recluse. I was sort of his front man; I had to do all the dirty work. He said, "You go back to that boss of yours and tell him—either pay up or else."

I walked around the block; I didn't go to Sherman because I knew his position. I went back into the bank and I said, "Mr. So-and-So (I forget his name), I've got news for you."

He said, "Well, that's good. What is it?" I said, "You're in the real estate business." He said, "What do you mean?"

I said, "You've got Lake Elsinore."

He said, "Well, now wait a minute, son. What am I going to do?"

I said, "I don't know what you're going to do, but when you tell us we have to pay, and we can't pay, there is only one other answer—you're re in the real estate business."

He said, "Well, I don't want it."

I said, "Well, then just leave us alone. In time we'll pay you if we ever can, but don't get tough."

He said, "I won't be tough any more. You just take your time, young man."

About six years later, we paid it off. But Mr. Sherman was then dead. He owed me about \$45,000 in commissions and couldn't pay me. So he gave me the Cal Neva Lodge. I got Cal Neva Lodge, it seems to me, in '28—my dates are going to be mixed up. I can't keep them quite straight.

Anyway, I sold it to McKay and Graham. And they put gambling in, you see. Prior to that, it was just a place where we entertained guests that were prospective real estate purchasers. They put gambling in, and it was very successful. But a rather amusing story: I sold it to them for \$65,000, and they gave me ten down, and they were going to give me the balance at the end of the season. Well, they had a big gala opening. In those days, I had some bad habits, and one of them was gambling. So we had a great time at the opening (in those days it used to take about two Swissess's [absinthe over shaved ice] to get me in the morning). I got up about noon and went in to see Jim McKay. I said, "Well, you had a good night."

He said, "Well, you don't owe me anything, Norm."

I said, "Thank God for that."

Then he said, "I got news for you; we don't owe you anything, either."

I'd lost the \$58,000. But they were very good to me. They loaned me five hundred to

get out of town. It was a very lovely spot, Cal Neva, in those early days.

I will tell you about my first meeting with Mr. Wingfield. Well, I got—primarily due to gambling, refusing, I guess, to accept too much responsibility, living a happy-go-lucky life. I got chicken or feathers—I was going good or going bad. And he hit me in a bad stage; I'd got pretty well in debt to the Riverside Hotel. The manager there was Charlie Sadler. So Sadler took me over to Mr. Wingfield's office. By then I owed them—I don't know—eight or nine hundred, I guess. I got it as big as I could. So he really took me apart. But he always had sort of a twinkle in his eye, so he said, "You're going to move out of that Riverside and you're going to move over to the Golden. Rooms are much cheaper." He took care of the meals and the laundry, and it wasn't too long before he was out there looking for somebody that needed a break so he couldn't get his hotel bills paid. I went in to him one day and said, "Mr. Wingfield, I got an idea. If you'd take a ride with me and...."

He said, "Well, what's the idea?"

I said, "Well, just give me three hours."

He said, "Where are we going?"

I said, "We're going to Lake Tahoe."

He said, "Well, what for?"

I said, "Well, please do it for me, and I'll get you even." I then probably owed him fourteen or sixteen hundred—not very much, but it's a lot if you don't have it. So we drove up to Tahoe. There was a piece of property adjoining the Sherman property that was owned by the Bliss family—that was the Carson Tahoe Lumber and Fluming. And, you know, they also owned the Tavern in those days. The road—it was impossible. We got over that and he said, "Well, what's the idea?"

I said, "I'm going to buy it."

And he said, "Well, what are you going to buy it with?"

And I said, "I thought maybe you'd loan me the money to buy it."

He said, "Well, who much are you talking about?"

And I said, "\$50,000."

"You must be out of your mind. Give you \$50,000 to get \$1,600 back?"

So we went into Truckee and to the old Capitol Bar and had a few drinks. In those days Mr. Wingfield drank—later he quit completely. Coming back, he says, "You know, you've got guts enough to ask me to do that. I'm going to do it." And he says, "Boy, you're going to pay me eight percent interest." Well, I didn't care if it was eighty percent interest. What was the difference? That's how we acquired Crystal Bay Development. It's interesting how times have changed. We put all those roads in—I guess maybe five, six, seven miles of them—all with mules and Fresno scrapers.

I also remember one time, old Judge Bartlett was a great friend. He used to love to drive up there, particularly in the fall. We had one of those \$160.00 cabins at Kings Beach we used as sort of an office. So, anyway, he loved bootleg whiskey and about the best bootleg whiskey was made out of Ely, and I was able to get it. So I always had a jug of bootleg whiskey when I went out with Judge Bartlett. Judgie was around, you know. So we're sitting in the cabin, colder than hell, eating pinenuts and drinking whiskey. I had an engineer named Hoffman, and he kept going over to the stove—a little wood stove, you know. Finally Judgie says, "What the hell are you cooking?"

And Hoffman says, "Dynamite."

Well, Judgie had started to take another drink. And he put it down and he says, "What did you say?"

And he says, "Dynamite." You see, in the cold weather, you heat dynamite before you blow it, and he had a stove full of it! Bartlett

went out of that thing and headed for the highway!

Then another time, George Springmeyer was my partner in real estate. He put up the development money. He had a client from Boston, I don't remember his name. I had a Cadillac sedan. He was staying up at the Tavern. So Springmeyer asked me if I'd drive him up, and I said, "Sure, be tickled to death." We were going up the highway, sixty, seventy miles an hour toward Truckee, and he looked in the back of the car and he says, "What have you got in there?"

And I said, "Dynamite." I had about eight cases of dynamite in the back of the car. Well, I never saw a guy get so frightened so quick, and instead of sixty, seventy, now he's got me going twenty, and every time we passed a car he shuddered. When we got into Tahoe City—he was living about a mile and a half beyond—he says, "Just drop me off here. I'll walk." Lots of fun.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE DEPRESSION, WINGFIELD'S OPERATIONS AND EFFECTS OF THE BANK'S CLOSING

Wingfield, in my mind, was one of the finest men I ever knew. He did have one bad habit; and that was this darn eight percent interest. I don't care who you were, you paid eight percent. Well, when you didn't pay it, he just added it on to your loan. He was very reticent to ever foreclose a loan. His main man was Jerry Sheehan, and his next man was Jack Walther. And Wingfield, being underneath this roughness a very kind man, would go anything rather than foreclose a loan. Well, he was Republican national committeeman, and the Depression was on. To give you an idea; a cow and a calf was selling for twenty dollars a pair. I remember he shipped a trainload of sheep to Kansas City, and didn't

even get the freight back. This was how bad it was, you see. And in those days there were a great many sheep in Nevada, and he had all of the livestock loans in the state, practically. There was the bank here, you know, the First National Bank, which was Walter Harris and Mr. Kirman. But aside from that, Wingfield had it all. It never should have closed, his banks, but the Democrats had taken over.

The RFC was loaning money right and left to save all institutions. I remember I rode on a train; I was going to New York with my wife. Wingfield was on with his attorneys, Thatcher and Woodburn, and they were going to Salt Lake to see this regional director of the RFC. And they were very optimistic that they would get this loan. But I feel that politics entered into it. In any event, he didn't get it, and the banks were closed; the United Nevada, the Wingfield banks. The Riverside Bank, where the Riverside bar is now, paid off a hundred cents on a dollar. United Nevada paid off ninety cents. This is after they had practically given away the assets of those institutions. There were two receivers; the receiver for the national banks was a man named Tobin (or vice versa) ,and the other was Leo Schmitt. (One was the national and one was the state. I forget which was which.) And they started to liquidate. Just as an example, the 42,000 acres Mr. Redfield now owns, he bought for a dollar an acre. The First National Bank bought the corner of Second and Virginia, which the year before had \$200,000 spent on it in improvements. They bought it for a \$140,000. The now Professional building, which was then called the Lyon building, sold for forty-five. I later bought it for sixty. The Medico-Dental building on Virginia Street, sold for around \$42,000. So there are some of the examples of the property prior to the folding of the bank. Any piece of range land in Nevada, regardless of its location,

automatically was worth ten dollars an acre. And this was sold (which is now, part of it, in the Reno city limits) for one dollar an acre; and was rented out. That was the old Wheeler sheep ranch. It was rented out even at that time, for ten cents an acre, to sheep. So it was paying ten percent. The land I bought when I built my house out on South Virginia, which was the old Lake ranch, I bought for \$80.00 an acre. It's now selling for \$12,000. It I'd take the other half—it was 500 acres, and I bought 250—the receiver told me if I'd take the other half, he'd make it \$60.00 an acre, Well, I didn't have the money.

And then there was a little sixty-acre piece up on Lakeside that he had a price of \$5.00 an acre, \$300.00. And I couldn't get the 300 bucks! I was just drained. I was out of gas. A man named Robert Larsen bought it and still has it. Those are examples of the tragedy of giving away these assets. I think I told you about the ranches. It was much the same thing. John Mueller and I worked together. I never was actually on Wingfield's payroll, but he'd call me, you know, if he had a job to do, or Thatcher and Woodburn the same. Mueller was; he got two hundred a month from Wingfield and fifty a month from the power company. Big dough! But a buck was a buck.

I was with Mr. Wingfield during all this bank crisis. I think one of the saddest days I ever spent... You know about ten percent of Nevada then was Italian population, and some of them pretty excitable Italians—together with other races. Of course, his life had been threatened a hundred times. So Johnny Mueller and I used to walk up to the corner, up to his house, which is where it is now, on Court Street, every morning and we'd walk downtown with him, to his office. Nobody knew when it was coming. He always carried a gun. He stuck it in his belt, called it Betsy,

and it was on full cock most of the time. Incidentally, so did Judge Bartlett. He always stuck a gun in his pants; it was such a long gun and he was such a little fellow he never could get it out of his pants—the gun was longer than his arm!

But anyway, Mr. Wingfield, his attorneys, John Mueller, and I walked into the bankruptcy court. He fought bankruptcy with every tool that he had. This was the one thing he didn't want to do. But it was impossible with the liabilities and the bank stock. So we walked into the bankruptcy court. He took his watch out of his pocket; he took his diamond ring off his finger, and he laid it on the judge's bench. He went in his pocket, it was under a hundred dollars, and he said, "This is it. This is it."

Well, during 1907, when Goldfield was at its height, the Crocker Bank had gotten into some difficulties, and Wingfield shipped gold down to them. It was a great help to them. So when this affair came about, and prior to the time of the bankruptcy, Crocker Bank had a mortgage on his house, the Riverside, and the Golden. They foreclosed. After the bankruptcy, they then went to Mr. Wingfield and said, "Here, George, we're going to hold these properties. We'll hold them forever if we have to. We'll give you \$250.00 a month to operate them and live in your house, and you'll have your office and your office force."

This went on until Noble Getchell found what is now known as the Getchell mine, which incidentally was on railroad land. John Mueller went to San Francisco and bought that land from the Southern Pacific Railroad. Bernie Baruch, who was another old friend of Mr. Wingfield's, came out and took a look at it—he had made a lot of dough with Mr. Wingfield in Goldfield and Tonopah, and he bank-rolled him when they opened the Getchell mine. And the first money that Mr. Wingfield got, he paid off the Crocker bank.

That's how he got the hotels and his house back. He was a very fine man.

"Getch" was a character, too. He had three or four different mines. Probably the best one he had was the Betty O'Neal. He had a little bank up in Battle Mountain. And believe me, when I say little, it was little. And he promoted his mines and he lived by selling stock in them. Probably seventy percent of the mine owners in Nevada at that time were doing the same thing.

Governor Balzar almost used to make his headquarters at a bootleg joint called the Rex, on the alley. Harry Menante, who is now a banker down in Las Vegas was hopping bells in the Golden Hotel, and one of the Dickerson boys, I forget which one it was—he was hopping bells, and Getch was living there, because he didn't have any dough. They all lived on Wingfield. So we'd be hanging around the bootleg joint, which Graham and McKay owned, and some new stranger come in, you know, we'd start hustling him for selling some stock in Getchell's mine—regardless of which mine it was; a different one every few months. So then we'd call up one of the bellhops to get hold of Getch, and we'd take the fellow back and introduce him to the governor, which made quite an impression. Getch would come over with his stock certificate book and the seal, stick it up on the bar, and we'd sell some stock. Then we'd cut it up. Getch was a fine person.

Little Eddie Mead and George Thatcher, they all had mines. Eddie Mead had, I forget the name of his mine—almost everyone had a mine in those days. Of course, a lot of them weren't very good. People were very mining conscious in Reno in those days.

They had these old prospectors; hell, there must have been. They'd come by my office for a dollar, two dollars, always had a big strike, you know. Getting the grubstake. Most of them

never left the corner of Second and Virginia, because the sun was warm there. I remember one fellow that came in, he had a piece of high grade ore (Lord, I don't know what it ran; it would be fantastic—maybe a thousand, two or three thousand dollars a ton); this was a piece about the size of a silver dollar, a little thicker. He says, "Boy, I really got it now." So I took a look at it.

I says, "How much of it is there?"

He says, "A whole mountain of it."

I said, "I tell you what you better do. You better forget about it." He says, "What do you mean?"

I said, "Well, if we go out and start mining that, you and I are going to get so rich, it's going to kill our ambition; it's going to ruin our lives!" He sat there a minute and he says, "You know, I think probably you're right." He says, "We'll just forget it, huh? You got two dollars?"

MINING INTERESTS

In the development of Weepah—it originally was founded by a man by the name of Horton, or something like that. Anyway, they developed it into quite a little boom because they had some high grade ore. Actually, as a high-grade camp it was not too successful as a producer. It was very spotty. We had one mining engineer with us—a man by the name of Eric Schrader. We did some development work on the possibility of open-pit mining it by taking out the high grade ore as well as the low grade and averaging it out. The study proved feasible.

We went down to Arizona with a man named James A. Perkins who had had considerable experience in open-pit copper mining. We brought him up and we developed the property. It was never a fantastic producer. From memory, I think we made about a

million dollars over a four or five year period. I believe that was the first open pit gold mine in Nevada.

Weepah is practically unknown as far as historians of mining are concerned. The reason for that, I think, is that it was never a major producer, and I would say, not trying to be uncomplimentary to the discoverers, it was more of a promotion than it was a mining operation. Can't remember that fellow's name—. Well, he's a man to be admired in the mining industry, although he was typically a promoter. He did have vision and he produced a sizable amounts of ore and profit over his operations, which better than a lot of them, I can tell you.

We fooled around for, I guess, twenty-five or thirty years looking at different properties. I know we made over a thousand examinations or studies of reports. The only two successful efforts that I remember in Nevada was the Weepah and a little mine called the "Emma E" out at Six-Mile Canyon out of Beowawe, which was a small high-grade operation.

The other successful venture we had in mining was later in the 1950's, at Moab, Utah, where we developed uranium property, which we sold for about \$12,000,000. We had invested in it, in development and interest, a little over a million. The buyers made about six [million] profit, which made us very happy. That venture was with Mr. Cord. This is about four miles from the Steen operation. We drilled it, and hit at about six hundred feet. They left a lot of the low grade in there. And it's quite interesting.

About two weeks ago, I went down to the nuclear test site and they have a new process, you could possibly call it an experiment at this stage of the game, where they go in with nuclear power and fracture the ore body and then, instead of mining it in the usual sense

that we think of, they pump reagents and chemicals into the fractured ore and pump out the values and then run it back to yellow cake. And this is being done the first experiment I believe will be done, for Kennecott Copper. If this is successful, and they feel reasonably sure that it will be, then it's going to revolutionize mining as we think of it today, because you just won't have to move the rock—you'll pump the mine out instead of lifting it out in the form of rock or ore.

About four years ago, I guess, during the time Alaska was a territory, it was not allowed to mine beyond the mean high tide line. And, as you probably know, the big strike in Alaska was made at the beach at Nome, and a huge majority of the mining of Alaska, particularly in gold, has been placer, with the exception of Alaska-Juneau, and Treadwell. They're the only large ones I can think of. When it was felt that statehood was about to become a reality, a mining engineer by the name of Ray Thompson came to us with a theory that if legislation could be passed by the state of Alaska, after it became a state, allowing mining activity to take place from the mean high tide line out to the three-mile limit, it might hold some fantastic possibilities.

Of course, during the last few years the mineral aspects of oceanography have developed tremendously. The first successful operation, I believe, was the reclaiming of diamonds off the African coasts, which became so fantastic in its production that the diamond clique, or the DeBeers outfit, took this operation into its group because they were producing too many diamonds. And then the study shows that there are huge quantities, unbelievable almost, of metals on the ocean floor. Some of them, particularly manganese and copper, and nickel and cobalt are at huge depths, even to five or six thousand feet, and there's been no development to date

as to the mining of these properties. Although there is a great deal of experimentation going on in submarine exploration, and tractors, and bells, etc. Undoubtedly, within the next few years they'll be doing it, and doing it profitably, as well as successfully.

But getting back to our operation, when we felt that the legislature could be asked, we mapped the whole Seward Peninsula and practically the whole shore line of Alaska, which, incidentally, is more than the shore line of the continental United States—and supplied Alaska with these maps. The legislation was passed allowing you to file on 5,200 acres of state-owned land for which you paid the state of Alaska twenty dollars. This was in the form of a permit and that permit allowed you two years to explore the property, in search of mineral. And if you felt that you had minerals that could be profitably mined or extracted, you then went to lease, and the lease was fifty-five year lease, for which you paid the state of Alaska one dollar per acre. We filed on between four and five hundred thousand acres.

There is the so-called Lopp Lagoon in the northern end of the Seward peninsula, reportedly to have 10,000,000 pounds of tin in it. This was at the base of Potato Mountain, which produced practically all the tin ever produced in North America. Farther south we filed off Good News Bay, where the largest platinum operation in the United States is located. We have not yet explored the values due to the fact that weather has not permitted us to get in there yet. We've just completed the preliminary sampling off Juneau for gold, and it looks quite promising. Probably, Alaska is the most highly mineralized area of any place in the world.

In the future I think under-sea or under-water is going to develop to be a major producer of metals for our country. This, of

course, is going on in many other parts of the world. Most of the tin we are now receiving from Malaysia is being taken out from under the ocean. It opens up a whole new field of thought in geology, and development of processes to extract it, and probably way in the future we'll be extracting the heavy metals from the sea water, although that's in the dream stage right now.

I think the future of mining Nevada is being greatly enlarged in the non-metallics as well as the metallics. You know, Dr. Roberts made a USGS study in northern and eastern Nevada; as a result, one mine is being operated by Newmont now, having been opened up about three years ago, and is the second largest producer of gold in the United States. And they are developing the one quite similar to it, south of Beowawe, near a place called Gold Acres, which apparently is as large as the Newmont property.

I like mining, although it's not my first love. It's been more of a relaxing hobby. I haven't any hope for profit, although we have had a little luck. I wouldn't say but what we probably spent almost as much as we took in. Maybe more. But, yes, I like it, particularly in the field of non-metallics—stuff like diatomaceous earth and limestone and perlite, and many other non-metallics. This country was pretty well prospected in the old days, but almost entirely for the heavy metals: copper, silver, gold, lead, zinc, etc. The early prospectors weren't looking for the non-metallics. They probably didn't know what they were and probably, in those days, they had little or no value. Today they're being used—sulphur for fertilizer, and diatomaceous earth in plastics and for coating paper, and many, many uses that they have developed within the last, say, ten or fifteen years. So it leaves a great deal of Nevada open for exploration of the non-metallics. You have seen recently where

they've opened up a cement plant in Fernley. And we have huge quantities of limestone.

I would say east of Lovelock is probably the second or third largest known deposit of iron ore in the United States, which someday undoubtedly will be developed. Then there is also a great deal of iron ore over there between Carson City and Silver Springs, down east of Dayton. That, according to US Steel that controls it, will not be developed within the next ten or twenty years, but there will come a time, So, mining is important to Nevada. Also, I think it has created a lot of romance around the state.

You know, silver has advanced from \$1.296 a year ago to about \$2.204 an ounce today. At these prices, if they could be maintained, it would make it profitable to go back into Virginia City. There are several mines up there that could be operated profitably on two dollar silver. So maybe old Virginia will wake up again. Roy Hardy has said that he thinks of the Comstock mines as a kind of national asset as far as silver is concerned. We're looking at two of them now. We have quite a bit of information on them and, if negotiations can be completed, I think we will be able to start a small operation in Virginia City, which will be open pit. You'll see a lot more activity with these advanced prices. Yet, the huge reserves are still, I think, in the Yukon, in Alaska. Potentials.

We were never directly involved with Noble Getchell in his mining ventures. Not directly. We had a stock position in the Getchell mine. Many years ago we had a small stock position in the Betty O'Neal, but not of any six size. He produced quite a bit of silver in his time. He ran the Betty O'Neal, in fact, until silver went down to twenty-nine cents an ounce, before he closed it up.

Now some friends of mine are working on it, trying to develop enough ore to build

a mill. I think it's very probable that it won't be as huge a producer, but it could be several million dollars. It's simple ore—there's no complexity of the ore—it's easy to handle. This is the outfit that calls itself Betty O'Neal Silver, Incorporated. They are a great bunch of men; unfortunately, they do not have any mining people involved with them. So they're having their problems, I think, trying to decide what to do and how to do it. And we've been helping them through our engineers all that we can. You have to have a feel for mining in the first place, and you have to know something about it in the second. The old story: shoemaker, stay to your last. However, the development that they have done is very encouraging.

We have just taken an option on the Sixteen-to-One Mine in Allegheny, California, which is—I believe—the fifth largest gold mine (as a producer) in the history of California. It had to shut down because since gold was raised to \$35.00 an ounce from that date, which was 1933, as I remember it, the mining costs have increased over 125 percent. So, finally, the Sixteen-to-One just couldn't cut it. If gold, either through subsidy or through advance in price, were to reach \$50.00 an ounce, rather than thirty-five, the Sixteen-to-One could again be operated profitably.

There are not a great many silver properties that are known that can be developed even with a higher price. The big one today is Texas Gulf Sulphur Timmons mine in Canada, which the engineers tell me will not only be the largest producer of silver in the world, but at each hundred feet of depth they claim there are two-and-a-half billion dollars worth of value (that would be lead, copper, silver, zinc, and I'm not sure about the gold). They have a nine thousand-ton mill operating that started last year. It is considered to be the largest mineral discovery in the last hundred years. It's a fascinating property.

There is one thing I like about mining: let's say it's a non-competitive business to an extent. Your average business transactions, say, whether it be real estate, or securities or whatever, there's a lot of competition in it and it creates a lot of jealousies. If someone wins, someone must lose, or feel they've lost, anyway. Whereas in mining, you're creating new wealth that helps the nation; you hope it helps yourself, profitably. But no one is unhappy if you find a gold mine. If you buy a piece of real estate from someone and it goes up, they can't help being a little bit concerned that they didn't hold onto it a little longer or something else, you know.

LAND AND REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

Farming is really my first love. What I like about farming—if you level land, you give it a posterity. If you grow crops, you're feeding people, and there is all good and no bad—except profit-wise, sometimes it's not so good. The leveling of land and the irrigation of it, I love it because it is a thing that is non-competitive. As I say, you're giving to posterity a land that will produce food which will always be needed and in demand. When you take a chunk of land that has nothing on it but sagebrush and put it into crops, and watch it produce, I'd say it's my greatest thrill. I will qualify that though; it's not very profitable.

The really profitable uses of land are the real estate promotions. They have been, and I believe they will continue to be, as we have an expanding population and we don't have an expanding world. So people are—they're ready to live in the streets! They need shelter, they need cover, and they need areas to do their shopping. So I would say there will be an expanding demand for it, and generally, supply and demand create price. However,

it has its ups and downs, too. If you get too much unimproved land and the taxes keep going up, why you can create quite a problem for yourself.

I started this tract housing company, I'd say it was at the time when all the banks were closed, right about the time Carl Wenthe moved up when they bought the Wingfield chain, you know, for Transamerica. He was trying to get things started again. Sam Jaksick had a lumber business here; he was broke. Alder Larsen had a building business in Carson City; he was broke. And I didn't have much. I went over to see Mr. Wenthe and I said I wanted to borrow \$5,000.

He said, "Well, I think we can arrange that. I'd like to see your financial statement."

And I said, "Mr. Wenthe, I don't think you would."

"Well," he says, "We have to have a financial statement."

I said, "All right, I'll bring one in."

I was up to my neck in hock up at Tahoe, with all the developments, and putting in the water system and the rest of the stuff, you know. I brought the financial statement in and he took a look at it, and he said, "I think we'll waive this." He said, "You get this financial statement out of here, but I'll loan you the 5,000." Sometime later, but not too much later, I was using that 5,000 to again start promoting millionaires. Sometime later, he called me in and said, "Norm, you're a good salesman. I've got some accounts that are in trouble, and I'll tell you what I'll do. If you start a construction company, I'll give you the best construction man I think I know. His name is Larsen. But," he said, "he just can't get off the ground by himself. And," he said, "I've got a lumber man that's not doing at all well. So you buy his lumber and I'll finance you in any reasonable deal, and see if we can get something off the ground."

Well, we started; we formed what was known as the Sierra Construction Company. And we started, I believe, the first tract in Nevada. They were little houses off Plumb Lane, just west of Arlington. And we had about forty lots we'd bought—we'd bought a piece of land off a dentist named Phillips—and we cut it up and subdivided it. And then I put together a group: Mr. Solari, senior, was the painter, Savage was the plumber, Harry Linnecke was the electrician, Christensen was the concrete man, and Larsen, and me. We started to build these houses. It was just at the time the FHA started; in fact, we started before the FHA was organized. (Harry Scheeline was in charge of the FHA. He was an old friend.) So we built these houses and we sold them for \$2,600 to \$3,100. They were two bedrooms and a bath, a dinette, living room, kitchen and a one-car garage on a lot. Hardwood floors. We felt well-built. But we had a seven-inch foundation and FRA called for an eight-inch. So we couldn't get in under FHA for that inch.

They used to kid me. Scheeline used to kid me. He'd say, "Gee, I was coming down Arlington. I thought I saw a big tumbleweed; it was one of your houses!" Anyway, we sold our houses. I remember Dr. Bill Edwards, who'd just got married, the foot doctor, you know. He couldn't come up with the 300 bucks we had to have for a down payment, so we fiddled around with a note. It's interesting, he now lives in our subdivision in Skyline. And the house we sold him for, I think it was \$2,800 or \$3,100, he sold for \$14,000. Those houses are over thirty years old, they're selling today for seventeen thousand—sixteen, seventeen, eighteen thousand. And they didn't blow away.

Then it was publicized that the golf course was going to go in, which was then at what was our airport. So there was (what the devil

was that old farmer's name? It will come to me) "Papa," we called him. Anyway where Greenridge now is, there was thirteen acres in it; it was then an alfalfa field. I had an awful time. It took me months trying to buy this from Papa. He was an alcoholic, and he used to come into the office every day—not every day—but he would get a dollar, two dollars, for a bottle of wine. And I kept giving it to him, trying to get this thirteen acres away from him, see?

One day he came in, and I said, "Papa, you know I want to buy that land."

And he said, "Well, I don't feel good today; I had lots of drink yesterday."

I said, "All right, I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to give you this hundred-dollar bill. And you are to bring back that hundred-dollar bill to me, until you sell me that land." (For the unheard of price in those days of \$500.00 an acre. Land was selling for fifty, sixty dollars an acre.)

Well, the old man carried the bill around four or five days, then he came in, and he says, "I can't stand it. I can't stand it. I can't give it back. You get your papers drawn up." Tie spoke in broken English. So that's how we got a hold of Greenridge.

Then we put in the first subdivision that was improved. By that I mean it had pavement and gutters and utilities, all put in and paid for, before we started to develop and sell. We were pricing it out, the lots, and putting on restrictions that are amusing to read today. I had restrictions; a house, \$7,500 minimum. And I put on some, \$10,000 minimum.

Carl Wentz, who was my father confessor, he said, "Norm, you're nuts. There aren't ten people in Reno that can pay \$10,000 for a house. You're out of your mind."

"Well," I said, "Pancho" (I called him Pancho Villa for the interest rates he charged me), I said, "Damn it, I think I can do it."

So we started the lots out at \$950.00. (They're now selling at \$25,000.) And we started to move in the millionaires. And we built with . . . I believe we advertised it, anyway, as the richest block in the world. The one house, I think it's a two-story wood house up there, we built for O. F. Woodward, who at that time owned Jell-O. The next one was built for a little broken-down gal named Doris Duke. And the next one was Arthur Bourne, who then controlled Singer Sewing Machine. The next was E. L. Cord. And the next one was for a family, a very wealthy family from Utah, their name is Kearns, Mrs. Kearns. And I still believe we probably did have the richest block in the world! We had a long start on it, anyway. That was the beginning of Greenridge.

Greenridge went very slowly for the reason that the high restrictions, the price restriction, and the restrictions that we had on it that you couldn't build a fence over a certain height, and you couldn't build a house without plans approval. (They're still on.) And these are very healthy restrictions because they give continuity to an area. When a developer has completed his development, his interest, naturally, wanes or goes to another point. I'll bring that out later where another type restriction fails. But this is a non-profit corporation, and each lot owner has a share of stock in that corporation and a vote. And they appoint their president and their officers, and if you want to build in Greenridge today, or change your house, you have to get the approval of that association, do you see?

Then we went on next to Greenfield. I almost lost Carle Wentz's friendship, because I paid the unheard-of price out there of \$135.00 an acre—Paddy Doyle and I. And it was around a hundred acres, in my memory. We put a restriction on it—all houses had to be white with a green roof or a black roof

and trim. We started it that way. Had it been carried out, it would have been a beautiful thing. But we sold it all out in sixty days, at \$65.00 an acre. Anyway, we didn't enforce the restrictions. (I forgot to mention, under the Greenridge restrictions, if you build a fence without approval of the association, the association can order you to tear it down; and if you don't tear it down, the association can tear it down and put a lien on the property. You see, if you try to enforce the ordinary restrictions, let's say that your neighbor did something that has broken restriction, this means you, as an individual, have to go to court. You might be two years getting into court and nine times out of ten, you'll say, "Oh, the devil with it." So that's why I say that restrictions such as Greenridge slow down your sales, but the ultimate is to success. And we now have those restrictions on Dant Boulevard and on Skyline—an association, because it gives it the continuity, and it prevents you, as an individual, having to sue or go to court. The association doesn't even have to go to court. It just tears down, that's all. And the funny part of it is, who falls in the trap but Biltz? I built my house up there, and the restrictions are a three-foot fence. Damn if I missed it, and I had a brick wall around the house. I made it four feet, and they made me tear it down. So I know they're strong. At that time I owned about seventy percent of it, and they out-voted me.

Then we started up Skyline, starting at the golf course, and developed that land. We made a mistake on the south side. We made those lots much too large. If you remember driving up Skyline, those are great big lots there—about an acre-and-a-half, two acres. The average individual today does not want to bother with all the lawn and the help problem and all the rest of it. However, it's all been developed quite well, I think.

And then our next move was Country Club Heights, going up Skyline and down off Moana—on the east side of Moana. And then we acquired this land from Mr. Dant about five years ago, which is now Skyline. It's interesting that it went much faster than I ever dreamed that it would. Five years ago, it was sagebrush. Today, there are over 200 houses up there, with costs of \$34,000 to, say, \$110,000 to \$120,000. And an interesting thing, there isn't one FHA on that hill, and there isn't one second mortgage, to my knowledge. Sometimes there will be one for three or four months. This is all conventional financing with the insurance companies, where they have to come up with twenty-five percent of the money. It shows you that Reno is a pretty healthy little town. And they're still going. We sold a million dollars worth in the last six months—in a "dead" market. Seventy percent of those were for cash. You wonder where they get it. Like an old friend of mine, a Jewish fellow, says, "Where the Hell do you gentiles get all the money we Jews take away from you?"

I haven't been as closely involved in later developments as I was in the earlier ones. I went out of the brokerage business, I guess it's about ten years ago. I gave my business to Ben Edwards. The reason I did this was because as a broker, under our tax laws, you're not allowed to take capital gains in real estate. About twenty-five years ago, we bought Donner Lake. We paid \$100,000 for the lake and 2,000 acres of land. We've sold about \$2,500,000 and we have half of it left, I guess. I know a \$5,000 lot now; our land cost is under thirty-four cents. But it's gone very well.

Of course, these things take a lot of time. Your money's tied up. Then I got out of selling. Incidentally, the last year I was broker, together with my partner in San Francisco,

over this desk I sold over \$40,000,000 worth of real estate. The last year most of that was in California. In fact, all of it was in California with the exception of Jaksick's timber lands.

METHODS IN REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

Suppose we were to start a real estate promotion, what steps would we follow? Well, first, make a feasibility study, which we might have made professionally, or we might make ourselves. As to the potential, well, let's take for an example Reno. Stone and Webster, who are the advisers to Sierra Pacific Power Company, estimate that in 1985, Reno will have a population of from 225,000 to 250,000 people. Well, this I accept as a conservative estimate because these are the figures that will control the growth or the expansion of Sierra Pacific. They would naturally be more conservative than, we'll say, the optimism of the chamber of commerce, or something like that.

All right, now here we are in Reno and we have roughly 70,000 people. And we'll accept the fact that sometime in the foreseeable future there is going to be a quarter of a million, and I believe it will exceed it. So where will we go? It's difficult to go very far east for the reason that you run into the Truckee River canyon, which doesn't open up any appreciable amount of land until you get out near Wadsworth or Fernley where it flattens out. Well, this is a distance of thirty-seven miles. So you start in by taking a map of the county, taking downtown Reno as a center] and start drawing circles. See what falls within those circles of miles balanced against price that you can acquire the property at, and how hard it would be to develop, which means that you've got to look out for a lot of rocks it you're going to put your improvements in—that can break you. Accessibility, water, freeways. And now, in our study, which we

made, I just touched on going east is a little too far in the future to get out to Wadsworth and Fernley. Going south, property is very hard to acquire in any size, except at what you feel is very excessive prices. Going west, you again have limited areas—eleven, twelve miles and you're in California. Now we purposely stay out of California because we feel that Nevada is a better area to work in. So that leaves north. If you start north from the University, you'd better watch out for the next five or six miles because you're in a great deal of rock, which makes it prohibitive to put in your streets and your water and your sewers, etc. The other factor is that the watershed of Peavine carries small amounts of minerals that are not exactly what you want in the way of domestic water. (That was the reason that water was run out to Stead Air Base from Reno, because the water carried small amounts of arsenic. Not that there was any amount that would bother you any, but it was in excess of the amounts of the Public Health recommendations—not standards.)

So we went beyond Stead and found a ranch that had been in the Dickinson family for over a hundred years, amounting to about 23,000 acres of fee land, or owned land, and controlling about 90,000 acres of government land for grazing purposes. Primarily, we were interested in acquiring a large amount of acreage at a price that we felt could be profitable. Together with this, we felt that Stead would develop into an industrial park, which I'm sure it will. Together with the fact that it's a very short run to Pyramid Lake, which gives you the resort atmosphere—waterskiing and fishing etc. Together with the fact that it is just off the main north-south highway 395 from San Diego to Canada. Together with the fact that it's just a very few minutes from the University of Nevada. Together with the fact that it has a golf course,

it has an elementary school and an airport. So, after about a two-year study, we decided that that was where we should go. And that's where we went.

Now time will tell whether we're smart or not because they don't all succeed. But in the analysis of the ranch, it has less alkali than any area I've seen around at all. And the soil analysis, which we did rather quickly, was then followed up by Soil Conservation Service. The soil is excellent. There are very, very limited areas in which there is rock to contend with, so your improvements, such as roads, etc., will go in easily and inexpensively. We have about nineteen wells dug on the property and they're putting down probably fifteen or twenty more.

So, sometime in the future, we will develop it. In fact, we're master-planning it now, laying out a commercial area and resort areas, parks, school sites, 9,000 square foot lots, 15,000 square foot lots, one-acre lots, five-acre plats, ten-acre plats. In effect, we're planning—way into the future—a city. And I thoroughly believe it will become a city, though I don't think I'll be around to vote in it. I think it will happen.

So you plan far, far in advance. This is done by professional land planners. After it's so-called master-planned, we go over it with our limited amounts of brains, and then go to the planning commission and have the master plan approved. They might have some suggestions for changes and they are a great help to you. They're very practical. And then you come to the all-important thing: timing. You watch your growth factor. You watch your demands. You make up your mind what ratio of mark-up or profit that you feel you're entitled to, and then when the time is right, or you try to make it right, then you move.

So it isn't a study that takes any great amount of brains, I would say, because you

can hire them. It takes some imagination, and it takes some reasoning, and it takes capital. Because when you're carrying what you're carrying there, 23,000 acres of vacant land, you want to be so darn well capitalized that you don't find yourself with a big mortgage debt that you can't service because you have no income from it. So if you can't afford, in that type of development if you can't raise the capital to not only own it clear but have enough reserve (in this instance, we're carrying a ten-year cash reserve).... If nothing happened in ten years we'd still have the capital to pay the taxes and do the work that we wanted to do on it. This is all-important because so many developers, in their enthusiasm or optimism, forget the many pitfalls there are between the starting of the development and its completion. You want to be ready for set-backs, depressions; you want to be fool-proofed. A lot of developers, not wanting to pay the price for capital, wanting to hold all of it themselves—or a majority of it—will go out and finance it, mortgage it, and pray to God. And sometimes God doesn't hear you. That is most important, I think, in development—to be properly capitalized and financed. Because the bank always calls on the payment when you don't have it. If you don't need money, the bank wants to loan it to you, and if you do need it, the bank wants you to pay for it.

But it's just a study of common sense. And this is true in any area that you want to go into; north, east, south, or west. You find out what the growth factor is, and find out what cost is, and the ratio that you feel that you can dispose at. We like to feel that we work on a ten-to-one ratio. I mean, if we buy it for a hundred dollars an acre, we want to sell it for a thousand. Because you have a lot of expense. You have your selling expense, you have your titling expense, carrying expense, development expense—surveys, roads, etc.

And when you take on a 23,000-acre block, you're looking at a city probably—a minimum of 20,000 people. And I think it will come about.

We have gone through this financing process many times; what are the steps we go through to find this capital? Well, that comes in primarily from experience. And when I'm advising people here not to acquire land be too optimistic, that is, believe me, from my heart and my experience, because I went broke about three times trying it and finally learned. Then we started out in a reasonable small way with local capital, friends who contributed sometimes an effort, as well as capital, put together with what the Hawaiians call a "Hui," partnership, and we were fortunate to hit a fast growing area in northern Nevada, the Reno area primarily, Tahoe and Donner Lake; and as we expanded, nothing succeeds like success. And we were lucky enough to succeed. And when you're going good, you don't have any trouble raising capital. Capital is chasing you. It's when you're going bad, you have trouble raising capital. And then you have all kinds of trouble.

We have been very fortunate in operating being both as a broker and as developers, to be very careful, first, not to allow anyone to purchase from us, either as a broker or as a developer, more land than he can afford. And this we used to drum into our salesman all the time. Don't hurt anybody. If I take a client and he has \$10,000 and I really go to work and make him a profit and he gives me the ten to buy something or he buys it at my advice and he makes \$5,000 now, I've got \$15,000 to work with because he is coming back. But if I take his \$10,000 and I put it into a piece of land that maybe won't sell for another ten years, then I've lost that client. And I've lost that \$10,000. So when you're operating on a five percent commission, it was a pretty nice year,

except we found our interests going more and more to development than to the brokerage business, and under the federal income tax laws, as a broker, you can't speculate, let's say, in real estate. Because they consider that you're stopping trade. Whereas as investor, you can hold it and take your long-term capital gain on it. So we chose to get out of the brokerage business and into the development business, and we have, as I say, we've had a reasonable amount of success on our subdivisions. We worked hard at them and we priced them right and the people who have bought have made profits, so that's all you need to have capital. It's that simple.

There is a lot of work in between. There is an old expression that property or real estate bought right is already sold. It's true. Because you do have an expanding population and if you take your time and buy it right and sell it right, you just have an expanding list of capitalists, clients, or whatever they happen to be. You take Greenfield, as an example, which is out at the end of Plumas street and Moana Lane. We bought it for \$135,000 an acre. We developed it with just dirt roads. At that time, there wasn't too much pavement used. It was too expensive. We sold it for \$650.00 an acre. We sold it out—I think it was 125 or 130 acres—in less than sixty days; and less than ninety days after that, it was selling for nine-fifty. So we had a lot of satisfied buyers. The last person that I remember selling it to originally, at six-fifty, called me up from New Jersey about two years ago and said, "Do you remember me?"

I said, "No, I'm sorry I don't."

He said, "Well, I bought some land from you up in Greenfield—five acres—when you first subdivided it."

I said, "Well, I'm happy you did."

He said, "Well, I just wanted to tell you that I just sold it for \$14,000 an acre, so I just

wanted to call you and tell you I was very happy.” And there is this thing you must guard against—because sometimes when the going’s rough and salesmen are hungry and need a commission, they forget that they might sell somebody something that they shouldn’t sell them. And the more experience you have in the business, the more you are able to judge that, even better than the buyer. I’ve had lots of buyers in my experience that get really upset with me because x wouldn’t let them buy something. You know, I say, “Well, go to another broker, I’m not going to be responsible, because I just don’t feel that it fits your investment program. And I say you shouldn’t buy it. If you want to buy it, go out and buy it, but not from me or through me.” And this has paid off.

Donner Lake, we started about twenty years. In fact, last Saturday we were sitting around the tract office up on Skyline, and a chap was sitting there and he said, “You subdivided Donner Lake.”

I said, “Yes, we did.”

And he said, “Well you know, my father-in-law bought a lot up there for \$450 and he just sold it.”

I said, “What did he get for it?”

He said, “He got \$5,500 and he feels pretty good.

I said, “Well, I’m happy.” We started out Donner Lake from \$400 to \$700 a lot, and I’d say it’s selling from \$4,500, \$5,000 and \$9,000 a lot.

So over the years, the forty years of our business, we have thousands of these people that sort of follow us. Of course, a lot of them I’ve never met, but the word gets around. It’s a very interesting business.

I mentioned that I had gone broke in doing these promotions a couple of times, so I’d better tell about that. You see, we got caught at Lake Tahoe. Lake Tahoe, gee, I don’t

know, my memory fails me, but I’d say we had 20,000 lots, maybe more. We sold them with low downs, and we had a tremendous volume going in 1928 and the latter part of ’27. But we made a great mistake: we put improvement bonds on them, and paved the streets in a large part of the areas. (It was called the Matoon Act then; it’s later been repealed in California.) When the depression hit in ’29, these people just walked away, stopped making their payments and we had bonded indebtedness against the properties. Each lot was bonded, let’s say just for an example, \$150 or \$200, and the interest was then around four and one-half, five percent, and we just didn’t have the money. So we lost a lot of them, we sold a lot of them for what we could get. I sold a lot of lots at Kings Beach for six dollars apiece. Well, it was six dollars, because I was going to lose them anyway. So that’s one experience.

We had a similar one at the beach this side of Redondo, Playa Del Rey. This, you see, comes under that all-important thing of timing. And during those days of ’30, ’31, ’32, ’33, most all of the properties, I’d say, in the developers’ hands changed hands. Either the banks got them, or people financially able to picked them up. Only we didn’t make any money off of Kings Beach, Nevada Vista, Lake Vista, Brockway Vista, Tahoe Vista. Other people, of course, have done fantastically well, but we just ran out of gas. We didn’t have the money. YOU can attribute it to failure; you can call it anything you want—all I know is that we went broke.

It taught us a lesson. And the biggest lesson of all is timing in debt. Just better you take a small piece and own it, than to have something happen. Well, in the past six or eight months real estate in Reno has been pretty flat on our Skyline development, which I believe is the most successful in Reno

today. The sales are off as high as seventy-five percent. And had we been short of capital, probably someone else would own it by now. An example of that is, north of here, at Horizon Hills, which was bonded on an improvement bond, an act similar to the one I explained at Tahoe, the owners have lost their subdivision. It's in the hands of the bond holders. That, I have no question in my mind, would have been successful, had it been properly financed, to be able to go over this rough period. When you got it all going out and none coming in, why, you can get in trouble. Much like the stock market, you can buy on margin if you want to: all sorts of fantastic happenings in that. So if you own them, somehow you can hold on to them.

At the bottom of the Depression, we were selling the few stocks we had, to eat. The real estate that we came out of the Depression with, what little we had left, the only reason we had that left was we couldn't eat it. And the bank didn't want it because they had too much themselves, so they let us keep it. You can seem awful smart if you time yourself right; you can seem awful dumb if you don't.

INTEREST IN NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Well, the experience can be helpful. You never stop learning. And you talk to everyone you can because sometimes a person will come in, and your first blush is that he is an idiot, yet he might have a fantastic idea. I've had some experiences that way. For instance, this Alaskan thing—at the time we went into it, you know, the mining was under water. Some of my closest associates said, "Norm, you stay out of that thing. They won't solve that problem in fifty years." And maybe they won't, I don't know; but I'm more optimistic.

And now several of them have come back. One of my closest partners said, "How did it happen I'm not in that deal up there?"

And I said, "Don't you remember? We were riding right down this hill," (we were up on Skyline) "and you said, 'I don't want any part of that. How the hell are you going to find minerals on the bottom of the ocean?'" Now he would like to participate.

I think oceanography and nuclear power are the two greatest aids to the coming generation. You know, I believe in ten years, a dam will be a thing of the past, as far as generating power. I think it's going. And with the nuclear power, which can be transported so easily, you know, tremendous quantities. We were down at the test site a couple of weeks ago. They showed me, I believe it was a titanium drum, it was thirty-two inches wide and fifty-five inches high. It was packed with graphite and uranium. (This is the new nuclear power plant that the government has been working on since 1954.) They inject nitrogen into that "barrel," let's call it, at 423 degrees below zero. It comes out the other end of that barrel in less than a second at 4,500 degrees Fahrenheit. And that little barrel, to date, the longest they have operated is fifteen minutes, but during that fifteen minutes, that little barrel generates over twice the power of Hoover Dam. It's hard to conceive, isn't it? Now if you need a power plant, well, take the northern part of Alaska that's so inaccessible, take your barrel up there, and you got it!

Well, they're "shooting the gas buggy" I think in the next two weeks, in New Mexico, and where they're going down into oil wells, and where normally an oil well is, let's say, sixteen inches across, they are going to build a cavern that will crack all that surrounding rock, maybe out as far as a quarter of a mile

to let it seep into that well. And they claim, or they hope, that they can increase the capacity of a field four and five hundred times. Now this is not a dream. It is being done; the first one is being done by or for El Paso and there are three to follow. To make one of those shots today costs \$375,000.

Now you take fresh water. We hear a lot about bringing it down from the Fraser River, the Columbia River, or Alaska, which, as your population increases, might be a necessity. However, I personally believe that they will find a cheaper method of treating salt water, through nuclear power. If not, why, they could blast a river from Alaska to Reno, Nevada, if they wanted to, with nuclear power. And as they learn more of the commercial aspects of this unbelievable power, they will find cheaper methods of production and use. Even right now, when we had the uranium property, we mined it under ground; today they are taking it all out with chemicals. They don't even move the rock. Pump it in, and pump it out like a sulphur mine.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENTS

We haven't done a great deal in industrial properties. We should have, but this Freeport bill, which I think is one of the most important things that's happened to Nevada, came about after we were pretty well involved in the residential properties. We did, years ago, when the Elks Club got in financial trouble—they had a lawn out in front of it [their building] on the corner of Sierra and Court. We bought that lot from the Elks Club for \$30,000 and built a building for Gray Reid and Wright, which is still there. That out in front of you, and now he's got you "behind the eight ball." So he said, "We have to have a financial statement of your corporation."

I said, "Well, we don't have any. In fact, we haven't incorporated yet."

"Well," he said, "we can't talk any more business until you give me a financial statement."

So Marsh got kind of hot. Marsh was kind of excitable anyway. We got outside, and he says, "Oh, the hell with it."

I said, "Oh, don't get excited." Conant had told us we ought to show a net worth of \$600,000 to get this contract.

He said, "Well, how we gonna do it?"

I said, "It's easy!"

So we went down to the bank and we deposited \$600,000, had it transferred from up here, and got a deposit slip for it. We went back to Douglas the next day. He said, "What about the financial statement?"

I threw this deposit slip at him. I said, "This good enough?"

He said, "The cleanest one I ever saw!" We became great friends.

And that was a great education of people outside of Nevada. Due to our Right to Work Bill, which is rather controversial, and due to the fact that when people move to Reno, they'll do most anything to remain here, they don't want to go back to Southern California—this was before the days of smog. So we employed about 250 people. We had a waiting list of over 1,000 wanting to move up here, and we had a labor turnover of less than half of one percent, at the time that Douglas was having eight percent and ten percent, because they could go across the street to North American; go here, there, anywhere, you know. They had no loyalty. But our people, we worked non-union, although the union tried twice to organize it, and we gave them every help we could. People didn't want it. One time they got two votes, this was the CIO—Scotty McLeod was the fellow's name. He came back about

two years later and we'd gotten quite friendly in that time. He said, "Biltz, I'm going to take another shot at that company of yours."

"Go ahead. Here is the names and addresses of the people. Here's their home addresses if you want to go to their home. Or do you want to call a meeting? We'll call them all in and let you talk to them." Which we did.

Next time he got three votes, and he said, "Oh, the hell with it!" He did tell me though—I see him every time I go to Washington—if he could have organized that plant it meant \$50,000 to him, in dues; this was all he gave a darn about.

Douglas came up two or three times. There were four companies that were making the same things as we were. And our costs were running twenty-five percent less than any of these other sub-contractors. And the directors came up, and Douglas came up, and Conant came up, and they took a look and they wanted to figure out what it was. Well, here is what it was: We told our workers that unless we did a good job, they weren't going to come this far out, away from their home plant in El Segundo or Santa Monica, they were going to get contractors closer up. So it was up to them. We'd do our part, but they had to do theirs. Well, I remember Ted Conant, one evening we were in our cups a little bit. And he says, "Norm, why don't you slow that damn thing down?"

I said, "Why?"

He said, "Well, it's embarrassing to the other subcontractors!" He said, "You're murdering them!"

"Well," I said, "Ted, how can I do it? If I try it, I might slow it down too much. I might not be able to get it going again." So he said, "Well"—the next day—he said, "Forget what I said; we're proud of you, but it sure is a revelation to us that you get the efficiency out of these people, and you've got the cream of

the crop up here. They like to play golf; they like to fish; they're home in twenty minutes, they're happy—the whole atmosphere is one of consideration and kindness. And they just work their tails off to hold those jobs!"

And this, I know had an influence on North American later, and I know definitely it had an influence on Bill Lear, because I showed him what we did, how we did it. So much of an influence, he told me yesterday, that he ran an ad for scientists and this and that in the Los Angeles paper, "Would you like to move to Reno?" and he got sixty replies the next day, of the caliber he wanted. And this, I think, is going to be of great importance to the industrial and freeport development of northern Nevada—far over southern Nevada, because they don't particularly like that Las Vegas climate, not like they do here.

POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF LEAR ENTERPRISES ON RENO'S ECONOMY

There is the about-to-completed transaction of the acquisition of Stead by Lear interests. And, incidentally, the Lear interests are now offering to firms like Sierra Pacific Power Company and Western Pacific Railroad and other interested parties that could be of service to a development like Stead, the right to participate with the Lear organization, dollar for dollar, so there is not by any means, a completely selfish operation on the part of Lear Enterprises. And I predict that this is going to prove to be of tremendous impact on our community. They're going about it in a very wise manner, a businesslike manner. C. W. "Buzz" Nanney, a personal representative of Lear Enterprises, has been here the past few days, and his primary activity now is to meet all members of the community possible, and he is asking them to make any suggestions they can or wish to offer for the successful

development of Stead Air Base. And after two or three months, at least quoting Mr. Nanney, all of these thoughts will be brought out. With the help of everyone who wishes to participate, an overall program will be developed. It might be interesting in passing now—we'll see if it occurs—Western Pacific, in conversation I had with them about a year ago, regarding Stead, agreed to allow to be run, or possibly even run themselves, an old-fashioned train starting at Fourth Street at the station, running out to Stead. It would be about a thirty-five minute ride, there to end up in an amusement park development—maybe with a western taste, with the possibility of meeting them with stagecoaches. And at the lakes that Lear is going to develop at Stead, to have rafts to take covered wagons across. The feeling that I have and try to encourage, is that in Reno we lack, very much, entertainment for children. And we all know, if we have children, that most of the time they're the boss, so they would encourage, I'm sure, a lot of traffic to our community by influencing their parents to bring them up here. Financially, I believe it would be a success because in the development of a new park you do somewhat similar as you do in an industrial park. You land-plan it, you develop it, and then you lease out to tenants space for whatever happens to fit in the plan, as in other places like Southwest Development out of Dallas, which has been a fantastically successful amusement park, and Marine Land, and Disneyland, and Knott's Berry Farm, to name just a few successful ones in the West. Percentage-wise, particularly in an area that has tourist travel like Reno has, I believe the possibility of failure would be nil. Mr. Nanney reacted very favorably to the thought. So in the future, children might have a chance to ride a train, if only for a short ride.

I think Stead will become a far greater economic stimulant to the community than

it ever was as an air base. The University has an excellent idea in their two-year course I feel, training people in fields of education which are not exactly comparable to the present four-year course, such as aviation mechanics and so on, which are so badly needed. When I was a kid we called these trade schools. I guess this is a glorified trade school. I hope so, because the trade schools of my youth were more important in the development of the country, where men became plumbers and carpenters and automobile mechanics, etc. Today these trades are governed by unions, primarily, rather than by educational organizations, and I just feel that the educational organizations can do a more constructive job than the unions and also, as I understand it, it will carry with it a college associate degree, which each year becomes more important to the youth of our nation to have.

LEGISLATION THAT HAS BENEFITTED NEVADA'S ECONOMY

On the firming up of the tax laws, we found after it was passed by the legislature, that attorneys of these wealthy people we were trying to attract to Nevada were looking for any possible reason to discourage them from changing their residence from some other state to Nevada, due primarily to selfish reasons. It became important that the inheritance tax law become a constitutional amendment. This was primarily caused by the state of Florida, which passed some advantageous inheritance tax legislation and attracted a number of people into the state, later to change the law, and the people felt trapped and were not anxious to make any further moves until they were assured that this would not be repeated in Nevada. This meant, as you know, getting a two-thirds vote of the legislature for two sessions, plus the vote of the people. On its passing in the second session, Governor Carville announced that he was going to veto it, which was naturally quite upsetting to those interested, as some [people] had already moved in.

Carl Wentz, then president of the First National Bank, asked me to drive him to Carson so he could speak to the governor. He felt sure he could explain the advantages to the man on the street through the income these people would pay on the real estate improvements, livestock etc. After quite a lengthy session with the governor, Mr. Wentz came out quite discouraged, and finally came to the decision that Governor Carville's feeling about vetoing the bill was that a large majority of the people moving in would be Republicans. And this was not particularly attractive to the Democratic party.

He did veto it, and we then took it back to the legislature, where a large majority of the legislators realized the necessity of this legislation. So it was passed over the veto.

How did we convince the legislature of the importance of this? Well, as you know, the legislature is made up—even more so in those days, more control, let's say, by the smaller counties. I mean Elko, Lander, Nye, Eureka. These people naturally were very

close to the county problems. Just as an example, almost half of the Lovelock Valley, in Pershing County had been returned to the county for tax delinquencies, and they realized they did not have within their own boundaries sufficient funds, or people with sufficient funds, to rehabilitate these ranches, many of which—I'd say a large portion of which—were at that time being held by the receivers. Which meant that they had to be disposed of, regardless of the price. And this could mean, and they realized it could mean that the properties might fall into the hands of speculators, who would not improve them, which would not materially improve the tax condition of the different counties. So, because they had been thoroughly educated, let's say, as to the advantages of these laws, that it was not nearly as much to the advantage of the person moving in as it was to the public that were already here. So we really had very little trouble getting the two-thirds vote. In fact, I think the legislature as a whole were quite upset with the governor's position, although I was somewhat sympathetic to his thinking, because I believe a majority probably were Republicans. However, I think I can say that in very, very few instances, did I see any of the new residents of Nevada take any sizable political position or make any sizable political contributions.

We specifically asked them when they came in to realize that, in coming into a new state, the people—older residents of the state, the old-timers in the state, let's call them—were quite jealous of their position and wanted to continue to run the state as it had been run. So I can't think of an instance, that, oh, with the possible exception of a few dollars, that any of them took any sizable position. There were two or three, but they were more interested in taking a position in national races—I mean by that the senators

and the congressmen—than they were in the election of state legislators, or governor, or secretary of state, etc. This is in spite of the fact that at least one of our clients, one of the really famous national politicians, Ed Flynn, became interested in the state. Flynn never became a resident of Nevada. He and Hugh D. Auchincloss and Howard Doyle and I bought the Quarter Circle S ranch from the receivers out of Tuscarora—which we later sold to Bing Crosby. (This was the first ranch that Crosby bought.) But Flynn never gave up his residency in the state of New York, because he was boss of the Bronx.

It's an interesting sidelight, that because of the strong organization that Ed Flynn built in the Bronx, that in the thirty-five years that he was leader, he never lost an election. I remember when the Bronx had a population of, I'd say around 2,000,000, a whole campaign was run for less than \$50,000, where today we'll spend \$150,000 in Nevada in attempting to elect, or to elect a United States Senator. The reason for that was a very unique organization. Each block had a captain, and that block captain reported to one of the body of eleven (I forgot what they called it now). But anyway, Flynn only had one vote, the same as any one of the other ten. The votes were carefully checked, particularly after the fact that they went to the polls and voted. This was the block captain's obligation. When an appointment was coming up, we'll say for a judge as an example, each block captain would report to his superior, and all the recommended names would be brought before the committee. Then the committee would boil those names down; there might have been fifty recommended. They would boil those down using only merit to eliminate the weaker ones, concentrate on the stronger ones, which might end up with three or four. When it got down to that point, this is when

practical politics entered into it. Then each one of the eleven committeemen had a vote. And that vote stood. If it was six to five for Bill Jones, Bill Jones was appointed. In this way it gave the block captain power, and certainly the committeemen power, and if the block captain happened to lose an election in his area, or a committeeman—even if they might happen to be Flynn's brothers—they were out. They had to toe the mark. They took a great deal of pride in these block captain jobs, and there was a lot of competition for them.

We attempted that to a small degree, in 1944, when Senator McCarran was running against Governor Pittman in the primary, which was real knock down, drag out. We used the telephones, and we used the checkers at the election polls to see that the vote was getting out. We felt that if we got the votes there, we could win it. It was very hard-fought battle, I think probably the toughest of Senator McCarran's political career. And he won it by, as I remember it, just over 1,200 votes. Governor Pittman was a very fine man, and a very popular man. And in the primary race, Senator McCarran was not nearly as strong among the Democrats as a party as he was among the voters of Nevada as a whole. Because I would say a majority of Republicans would vote for him, because he was a conservative. So that was, I think, the toughest fight Senator McCarran had. To get back to Ed Flynn, he never came in on the legislation, he came in from an investment standpoint, and more for the fact that he wanted a place for Dicky and his other two boys to grow up in the summer. I think we had that ranch about five or six years when we sold it. And Bing Crosby bought it for primarily the same reason—to raise his children out there in the summer. And Flynn's children did come out until they were old enough to lose interest in bucking horses and the rest of

it. Hugh D. Auchincloss's son spent one, two summers, I believe. Then Hugh D. went down and bought a ranch out at Genoa, which was later sold to Mrs. Mesta you know, and her family, and they put the dairy on it. (Perle Mesta's nephew ran for Congress.) Mrs. Mesta bought it from Hugh Auchincloss. And that was the end of Auchincloss's investments in ranches in Nevada, also the end of Flynn's.

Dean Witter, although he never became a resident of Nevada, brought large sums of money in when he developed a part of the Dunphy ranch, which we had bought up on Maggie Creek—I think one of the first in Nevada to fence over 100,000 acres. Prior to that it was primarily running open range. But he got a ten-year permit, and fenced the whole thing. It's been sold two or three times since.

For Major Fleischmann, we put together were known as the Morgan ranches, down on the West Carson which were the Morgan ranches, and Nine Mile, and I forget the names; there were about five of them together. And he had them for three or four years. Then he sold it back to us because he didn't like the corduroy road going in it. We bought him a ranch in Jacks Valley, which, I don't remember, but I think he had it to the time of his death. It was a very attractive ranch; it was next to the Fulstone property.

Government, which I prefer to use in preference to politics, because it allows you elasticity, voting for a Democrat as well as a Republican, I think has been cleaner, and still is cleaner in Nevada than any place in the world that I've ever been. During the years that I assisted Mr. Mueller and Mr. Wingfield and Thatcher and Woodburn at the legislature, I can't remember a single instance except one that anything unattractive was asked for. They voted them as they called them. And although you probably didn't have the number of attorneys, or, let's say, the

number of college graduates, that you have in some of the larger states, the people were very solid. They were primarily mining men and ranching men, men who might work with their hands as well as their heads, and had grave respect for the position they held, and treated it very seriously.

Some of them—a couple of those senators were very hard to get elected. I remember one was Johnny Miller, who was from Mineral County. The problem we used to have down there was Indians. They didn't know how to vote, and really didn't care much. It was pretty much the last fellow that got to them. And we did used to have barbecues and things like that, to try to get them together more than to bribe them. I remember we used to take a sample ballot and we'd punch holes in it, so the Indian would get in the booth—you know some of them couldn't read and they wouldn't remember—so he'd lay it over the ballot and where the holes were they'd make an x. So we got them to vote. But one year some smart guy down there at the last minute—I don't know how he did it; I don't know yet—he had the size of the ballots changed and when the Indian got in the booth the holes didn't fit where they belonged. So Johnny Miller, I think he won by eleven or twelve votes.

Lander County was always a great battle with Rene Lemaire, Senator Lemaire, because he lived in Battle Mountain and most of the votes were in Austin. So we would go out and help these different senators wherever we could, but not monetarily. It was done through friendship. I know two or three times, Rene Lemaire won by under five votes. Between John Mueller and I, we really knew just about everybody in the county. Yes, we knew. Well, more than that; we made it our business to know. John Mueller, because of his long association with the Wingfield banks, knew a hundred times more than I did. But

he steered me around, telling me where to go and what to say. He kept files on all these families. He could tell you who married who, and when and why and how. He always knew, "You know, so-and-so is his cousin, so get his cousin to go out and see him." So this is more or less the mechanics of it.

The other thought was that during the interim (we didn't have special sessions then) , you were continually doing favors for these people and that was part of the business, to place yourself in a position that you wouldn't ask a favor unless you had granted one. And also to keep it clean. If we saw bad legislation, we fought it. We weren't always right. Much like the Mechling campaign—we knew we had the right information; he was not the proper man to represent the people of Nevada. Until the truth was known, we weren't too popular.

On what grounds did we call something bad legislation? Oh, I would say selfish legislation, rather than bad legislation, which would be the same thing. Special legislation, we just felt wasn't healthy. Because in a small state like this, I think it's the obligation of anyone who gets into the business of politicking, lobbying, government, what ever you want to call it, his number one obligation is to the people of the state as a whole. And if he loses sight of this, he is headed for the doldrums, because it will catch up to you pretty fast. In those days, you know, Nevada was 100, 105, 110,000. Very little was attempted at special legislation. Naturally, every little group had their pet bills, and the ranching people had theirs, and the mining people had theirs. But this we recognized, although when they tried to go too far—and it's only natural that they're going to ask for more than they're entitled to, let's say—then you had to put the brakes on. I know we spent several years on medical legislation, assisting its passage

primarily to encourage the better-trained medical men to come to Nevada, because they were protected against a lot of bills that allowed quacks, but still they got hungrier and hungrier every time the legislature met. So you'd have to say, "Whoa, boys, let's slow down a little bit!" Just as an example, there was a group in the medical profession that were against osteopaths. And whenever they'd try to introduce that bill, we'd kill it, because that's what I mean by what we termed unfair legislation. We weren't medical men; maybe we were wrong, but we felt osteopaths had their place in the community, and were educated people. However, there were other things that we eliminated. The result was that I think today—that particularly northern Nevada, and I think fast growing in southern Nevada, per capita—I think we probably have the finest group of medical men of anywhere in the world. And they're successful.

And then you always had trouble with the university. They just don't figure economics as much as they do their desire. And you have to admire their desire, but sometimes you can't afford to do it quite that fast. So it was a matter of trying to keep a balance.

When the sales tax was passed, there were certain groups of individuals that were against it. Although nobody likes more taxation, as we were growing we needed more income. We did work for the sales tax, for the reason that due to the number of tourists that go through the state of Nevada, about seventy percent of that tax was paid by outsiders. And we felt this was healthy so we worked for it.

While we're still talking about the economy, as well as politics, so many of the times that you've seen me quoted on the possibilities of growth of the economy in Nevada. Generally, my attitude has been quoted as to keep the state small and economy kind of compact. Well, there never was a

bigger misquote! It could well be the way I expressed it. I expressed it in this way—that at one time when Reno was at under 30,000, I forget the name of the industry, but they were talking very seriously of coming in with about 6,000 people. Well, now on the face of that, you know, that sounds wonderful. But when you go into the reasoning of that, on 1,000, 2,000, yes, this year and maybe 2,000 next year, but if you hit a town of 30,000 with 6,000 people in a specialized industry it meant the expansion of hospitals, the expansion of schools, and the expansion of all of the utilities, and facilities far beyond our ability to do it. And I did make this statement: I said, "This is too fast for one thing; and the other thing is in a town of 30,000, (we'll say it was that at that time), personally, I would not like to see one industry come in employing 6,000 people, which means that to service the 6,000 [we'd need] 18,000 or more than fifty percent of the present population, and then for some cause, or some reason, if that industry decided to move out, we would be in an impossible position." This was true in San Diego when Consolidated closed. It's pretty much true in Seattle, that Boeing just as a contract, is the whole city. I've worked my heart out to bring in small industries at a rate of speed that we could afford them.

We have, as you well know, we have the two types of ballots on bond issues, where the property owner votes and the non-property owner votes. And this is probably the greatest thing that ever happened to Nevada to keep its economy. And on top of that, not only does it have to pass the property owner group and the non-property owner group, but it must be repaid at a rate of twenty years at five percent a year. Which I believe is great. I think it was written into the constitution by Senator Stewart. This is very healthy, because if you vote for a bond issue, we'll say a new

swimming pool or whatever, it means that you have to pay for it, or help pay for it, whereby if you're in a state like California, which is now suffering so badly with their relief program, with the indigents, that they don't care; they're never going to pay it and the result all is, it's becoming almost a catastrophe in California. How they're going to be able to control it, I don't know. Those were the reasons; that was my reasoning—I was concerned with one big industry moving in here that we couldn't afford. This meant more of everything. Try to take a city like Reno, of 30,000, and increase it, we'll say to 50,000, and after putting in the services that they would demand—they would have to have—and then try to pay for it over twenty years, you'd have heard more screaming when they got it. But I got it right away, because probably the way I've stated it you would interpret it that way, that I was trying to keep Reno small. I wasn't trying to keep it small. I was, and am, to see a controlled and a healthy growth, rather than an overnight, fantastic growth.

And the freeport law. We worked our hearts out on the freeport law. Ed Bender should be given entire credit for the conception of the bill. I believe it's one of the healthiest things that's happened to Nevada, because you get the taxes on the improvements, and you have maybe fifty people working in this building and a hundred over there, and twenty over there, so if you do lose one, you're not hurt. You can live with it, you know. And I think it's going to be, well, as important to Nevada as the building of the railroad in 1867.

Now there was one [plan] here in the last two years; it was for a packing plant. It was chickens. They wanted to have them raised in the community and packed in the community—about 5,000,000 chickens a year. Well, your first flash of that is "great!" But when you get down to the quantity of water

it would take for such an installation, you can bet you're going to have drop your population back. As near as I've been able to get, we have a water supply that will service a population of about 300,000 people, with a normal usage. I do wish some day they'd get meters in here, because I think this will conserve our water and allow us a much further growth. Now this is unpopular, too, but I think it's realistic, because you see when you go down the street and they're washing the leaves off their yard. Well, in a desert country this is, to me, waste. And I don't think that the bills would be any higher, because I think the people would use less. They would fix the water faucet if it leaked. Now they don't care because they charge by the size of a pipe. Well, if this plant had come in, it would have employed about 500 people, but I don't believe it is the type plant—and again, as I say, I can be completely wrong. It would use the water equal to about 50,000 people. And although I don't mean to frighten any area at all as to a potential water shortage, we still would like to be 300,000 and be able to take a drink. But there is a limit. There is a limit. And maybe it's 500,000; they tell me 300. So these things, as I say, you very often make mistakes, and I'm only one ignorant donkey. When Mueller was alive, we used to try to think them through, and I know we made a lot of mistakes.

And there were times when we were given credit for having a great deal more power than we ever had. When you are supposed to have power, you sure as the devil create a lot of enemies, sometimes through jealousy and sometimes they just don't want to see anybody get ahead. And they take shots at you. I had them from Frank McCulloch, and I them from Denver Dickerson, and oh, Hank Greenspun. They were predicated much on the fact that I was a maverick in politics. I was a Republican, working half time for the

Democrats, and they were dyed-in-the-wool either Democrats or Republicans. And they just couldn't see crossing a party line. That was the primary season. Then sometimes we, oh, I can remember back when the Democrats had all the power in the state, and I went to some of them, my Democratic friends, and I said, "Look, give us a bone, us Republicans, let us have something." So we got something, and the other way we would have had nothing. Then during the days of McCarran, he was in many ways a very demanding person, and one of the greatest minds I think I've ever known. Again, he was not always right. But no one else is. You only have to be right fifty-one percent of the time and you're a success. He was due a lot of criticism, and we that were close to him took it with him, protected him up to the point that we could. This was the big battle between Senator McCarran and Denver Dickerson and Frank McCulloch that developed over the Mechling affair. Bill Berry was always very fair to me when he was active. And so was Scrugham when he had the Journal. We used to have a "Red Cross drive" about every two weeks when the payroll became due on the Journal. But we'd go around and collect ten bucks here and fifty bucks there to keep it going for the next two weeks. That was how broke it was. I remember the man that headed the Gazette, Sanford, the father. You know, he was financed, well, not financed exactly, but always helped by Wingfield whenever he needed helping. In those days, you know, the papers were very small and the advertising was limited, and the profits were very small, too. For some reason, I never learned why, Graham Sanford, when Mr. Wingfield got into his difficulty with the banks, Mr. Sanford turned very bitterly against him. And I've never known the reason. They were good friends. And then as Graham went on, you know, John took

over, and John's always been very fair. Bryn Armstrong was rather difficult for many years until the Gazette was reorganized and the stock was distributed among the employees and the money was on the other side of the table. His thinking changed quite drastically. We still kid him about it. Well, he was head of the writers' guild, and the strike, and the rest of it. Now he's much the opposite. The boys, Calhan, always ran a good newspaper down in Clark County. Of course, Don Reynolds has become quite a power, or could be—let's put it that way. Could be quite a power in Nevada because of the circulation that he controls. But I never seen him take a position. When Cahlan was there, he did. He was a Democrat. You couldn't get "Republican" in the paper.

THE FREEPORT CONTROVERSY

Well, Ed Bender, who had a small warehouse then—that is now run by his son Frank—conceived the idea of allowing people to warehouse tax free in Nevada, as long as they did not distribute that merchandise within the state of Nevada, that this would generate income in the way of new buildings, and the way the business is, and in the way of industrial improvement, it wouldn't be costing the people of the state of Nevada anything. Because if you didn't have it, they wouldn't be here. It had a lot of natural appeal. However, the small counties couldn't see that it would help them particularly, so they were more or less lukewarm on the freeport law for two or three sessions, although it gained momentum all the time. We could see it, because it was the type growth we had always hoped for, sanctioned; fifty people here, hundred people there, two hundred people there, thirty here, together with millions of dollars of improvements to go on the tax rolls. Employment for our construction workers,

expansion of the city limits. In other words, we couldn't see anything wrong with it. We couldn't see where it hurt anybody. And it helped a lot of people. And it has so worked. Together with the fact that, you see, they have it in Arizona, they have it in New Orleans, they have it in Utah, different versions of the so-called freeport bill. But we have a great advantage, and that is that, geographically, Reno is the center of the Pacific Coast, the fastest growing area in the United States. And it's connected with Washington, Oregon, California by, we might say, two railroads. Well it is two railroads; you got the Western Pacific and the Southern Pacific. You have the north and south highway from San Diego to Canada—Highway 395. You have Highway 80, let's say, from San Francisco to Chicago. And you have a climate that's conducive to warehousing from the standpoint of humidity or moisture. Because of our low degree of moisture, you don't have to put as much grease or preservatives on the product if it's subject to rusting or disintegrates as you would, say, in Sacramento.

So everything looked good to us on it. We really worked hard on it. It wasn't a matter of pressuring any of these senators. It was showing them that if dollars fall into the state of Nevada, although they might happen to fall into Washoe instead of Pershing, well, people from Washoe will go out to Pershing and maybe they'll buy a farm. They'll spend some money. So our prime interest was to get it into the state. Sure, we would have rather have had it spread out over all the counties, but it isn't practical. And I believe, as I said, I think it's a fantastic way, and I think you've only seen the start of it. In talking with Dill Lear the other day, he feels that within two or three years he'll have 3,000 [employees]. If they spread over three years he'll probably bring in oh, six to 1,200 a year. He believes

that over ten years, it will probably be the largest development in Washoe County, and a healthy one.

The freeport law—well, it got where we had to make it a constitutional amendment. I say we, I mean several hundred people working on it—not me, I was a wart on a wart on a pickle, but I was down there. These people didn't feel at ease, we'll say, to make a long-term lease on just a bill of legislation that could be changed at any time, so we had to go back and have it made a constitutional amendment. And this gave them the confidence to come in.

I was just talking Friday with Smith, Kline, and French, they are going to build down here on Mill Street, right across from Lynch Communications. Beautiful building. They're the second largest, I guess, drug firm in the United States. They own, among many other things, Sea and Ski. They're going to put in an administrative office and a warehouse. It'll be probably a two or \$3,000,000 addition.

And it's a funny thing, it's like getting the elephant out of the bottle, once they come. Now Abbott's going to look; and on and on. Because once they see it, they don't have to use their brains to see what it saves them. It saves them, particularly, we'll stay for the minute with Smith, Kline, and French; you know their inventory per cubic foot is pretty fantastic in value in those drugs. So the taxes could really—it wouldn't surprise me a bit if it saved them over a half a million dollars a year, in Nevada versus California. It could be greater. I'll find out as soon as they get started out here. But then they take a look and the stockholders in McKesson say, "What's the matter with you?"

I'm certain that the automobile industry and the aviation industry are going to be two of the big freeport warehouses in Nevada. It hasn't come yet. Funny. You just have to get

the right one. And you have to go out and sell it. Now I was talking with Dick Campbell of Sierra Pacific, and they have two men on full-time now, working eight, ten, twelve hours a day, just talking with prospective purchasers or leasers—every day of the week. Right now, I'd say there are at least fifteen in town, maybe a lot more; there are a lot more that I don't know of that come in and you don't hear of them, and are considering. And the other is the furniture remanufacturing. Again, you're in an advantageous position to distribute to the west coast. You can bring your lumber in what they call in-transit rates, you know, and then cut your frames and things.

LABOR PROBLEMS

And then Right to Work Bill—which is a very controversial bill, and I've never had much activity in it, although I'm sympathetic to it. This is another great incentive for them to come in here. And a big thing to me is the fact that the people of southern California, and we'll say California and San Jose, that area, when you pick up the Wall Street Journal, there will be a hundred ads for physicists, scientists, you know, what-have-you. You can call those people, and when they see the opportunity to move to Reno versus, we'll say Los Angeles, Pasadena, the best of them want to do it, because the living conditions, although it's a little more costly, it's not much—it's under five percent. But they have so much more freedom. And then, if they do work under the Right to Work Bill, which many workmen prefer, that allows the manufacturer to work piece work if he wants to. Or, let's say, Jim Jones' wife is going to have a baby and he's a little short of dough, he can work Saturday, work overtime, you know, at a rate that manufacturer can afford to pay. So it has its good points. Some objectors to it,

with some good reasoning, say that the unions work very hard to get these wages up and they have to do it with the dues of their members, whereby on the Right to Work Bill, they don't get any dues from the workers. That seems to be the main objection to it, although I don't believe they'll ever vote it out. I don't think so. I guess, in many ways, a man should have his choice whether he wants to work under union organizations or under a person. I know it would annoy the hell out of me if I had to pay eight dollars a week to the union. I don't think I would. I won't be told what to do, when to strike and when to eat.

Just digressing a minute: [On the copper industry strike] My mining partner, John Heizer, just got back from Butte, Montana. And it is really pitiful. The stores are broke. People are moving out. The whole darn town is for sale, Ely is almost as bad. And you know, you feel terribly sorry for the little grocery store fellow, the drugstore owner, or the furniture man, who've lived there all their lives, we'll say. I think it's unfortunate that strikes are allowed to go to this extreme. I believe in the right for people to strike, but I really think that they should have some control on it, because this strike has gone on so long that any raise they get, they'll get a raise, they won't make it up in twenty years. In the meantime, the little guy's busted. But how would we control it? This is the big question.

Well, I think each of the laws that were passed that we worked on (which were taxation, and freeport, and medical) have all contributed very greatly to the economic growth of the community.

Take the medical profession. A lot of people, your first blush is, well, here's a lot of doctors making a lot of money. But when you get in to it a little deeper, they're doing thirty to forty major operations a day in Reno. When I came here they might have

done three. Which means that their families are here, and their families are spending money. So it spreads over the economy. It isn't only the doctor; it isn't only the hospital. We have done a lot of work for Saint Mary's. I have the greatest admiration for Sister Seraphine and Sister Gerard and all her girls, and I've helped them wherever we could, by getting our friends to make contributions, some of which have been quite sizable. The Fleischmann Foundation, I think, has been a great aid to Nevada. And it came about through the inheritance taxes without any question, nobody would challenge it, I don't think. Together with the deposits in banks, and hiring of local legal talent, it spreads out.

GAMBLING LEGISLATION

The gambling bill, I think, was a great boon to Nevada. I don't know if I ever told you about that. We had had gambling here I guess forever, but it was illegal. So all the legal brains of the state of Nevada—I say all—principal ones—went to work to draft a gambling bill. Now this is quite a job to cover all the bases. So there was a little senator from Storey County named Don McGuirk. He wasn't too smart. He was a nice fellow, but he wasn't quite the caliber of some of our other senators. So the gambling bill had passed the house and passed the senate, and was on its way down for the governor's signature. And Senator McGuirk was out in the hallway, and he said, "Can I see that bill?" Well, his business was that he had a little grocery store up in Virginia City and he had two slot machines in it. So he goes over the bill, and over the bill, and he goes back and he goes over it again. I forget who had the bill, but he was taking it downstairs. McGuirk said, "What about slot machines?" They'd forgotten slot machines! After all these months of work on this bill! It was hurriedly

rushed back and slot machines were added, and it went through the senate again, down to the governor. But all the senators, all the assemblymen, all the lawyers, all everybody, had missed slot machines. So McGuirk will go down in history I guess. He was a nice little fellow. I know there were a lot of red faces in the legal profession, because the slot machines, even then, were a large part of the gambling, although in those days, very few places owned their own. They were owned primarily by John Petrazzini and his group. You know, they'd put them in like the Cal Neva or they'd put them in the hotels on a lease basis. I'd say ninety-five percent of it was that way. And he also owned the Palace Hotel. He leased slot machines to the Cal Neva and also to the Bank Club which were owned by McKay, Graham, and Sullivan, you know. And they had the Palace. So Petrazzini served them notice that he was going to take over the Palace at the expiration of their lease. And this was where he broke his hold on the slot machine business, because they went out and bought their own, and everybody else said, what are we doing paying Johnny? So I think he lost a more lucrative business than he gained. By taking over the Palace as gambling house. Senator Cord, when he was in the senate, did a very smart thing, in my opinion, There was always a great deal of talk—and there is still some, but much less than there was ten or fifteen years ago—that gambling would be voted out it was put on the ballot. I can go back about thirty years, and about every two years, here comes somebody with a petition. They get a few hundred names on it, and then the gamblers say, "Well, what do you want for the petition?" And they'd say, "2,500," or "5," whatever it was. They'd buy the petition and tear it up. This was a semi-annual thing. With small counties, excluding, oh, possibly Elko and White Pine you get

relatively nothing from the gambling. Then it's costly, too. We'll just take Pershing County as an example. You know, they've got to police the highways for the people coming to Reno and going back. With a very small county—I think Pershing's around 3,200 or something—this was quite a chore. So Cord conceived the idea when he was in the senate of distributing a certain portion of this taxable income from gambling over the seventeen counties. And this really was smart thinking, because you couldn't vote gambling out today. Little Esmeralda County's got so much money with four hundred registered voters in Esmeralda; they got money running out their ears. They are all very happy about it. Prior to that time, you heard a lot of conversations about, "We have to service the people going in and out, we don't get anything," and I don't blame them. Now they have a nice little equitable income according to population. And if my memory doesn't fail me, I think they distribute forty percent to the outside counties—I've forgotten the figures on the bill.

LIQUOR LEGISLATION

We had fantastic senates in those old days. There was Bill Dressler, Johnny Miller, Noble Getchell, and George Friedi-voff. Really great.. Most of them were ranchers, and they had a lot of good solid common sense. And nobody kicked them around, I guarantee you that! Senator Robbins, who was the majority leader you know (Democratic) , had a great regard for Bud Loomis, Republican. I've forgotten if Bud was minority leader or not. But Bud would read the bills which lots of the senators, they just didn't have time, you know; they'd depend on committees and other methods of finding out the gist of it. But Robbins, during his years he'd read every bill that came up. And in the later years, suffering

from this emphysema, he just didn't have the strength to do it, and he depended entirely on Bud Loomis. But he ran that senate, that boy.

One time we were fighting a liquor bill. Pete Barengo was one of our pals. He was working to get the bill passed and I was working to block it, primarily because Artie Samish, who was the political boss of California, had told me in New York in front of one of the large liquor dealers, that he was running the state of Nevada because he had Malone. And he was going to pass this; he called it the Schenley Bill. The reason for the bill was that you had to have twenty percent four-year-old whiskey; well, then you could put anything in for the other eighty percent. And the reason they wanted the bill, was that a lot of the companies didn't have enough of four-year-old whiskey to do this. So they wanted it two years or older. It was a senseless bill, because, what the hell, if it's two years old, if you put junk in it you haven't improved it any. Well, anyhow, I was out to beat the so-called Schenley Bill. Barengo represented the liquor dealers here. He was out to get it passed. And we used to ride out together every day to the senate. One day we were riding over—and this Pete's a lovable guy; he's always got a grin on his face—and he says, "Boy, wait "til you see what you get hit with when you get over to the senate this morning. You're going to get clobbered."

I said, "Okay, Pete, what is it?"

He said, "Well, you wait."

So I got over there. Senator Robbins' desk was the first one on the right as you went in. And Pete's with me, and with those big, flat feet of his, he walks like a walrus. So he's there with a big grin. He has sort of St. Vitus dance—he's hitching his shoulder.

And Senator Robbins said, "Norm, come over here for a minute, will you?" So Pete is standing—Pete isn't five feet away—and

he says, "Look what I got here. I got 150 telegrams. I only opened two. They'll all be the same thing, asking me to pass the Schenley Bill." Of course, Pete could hear all of this. Senator Robbins says, "Here, you can open them if you want and then throw them in the john." Pete was so deflated! His big plan had gone askew. So we finally compromised on two-year whiskey.

We had a lot of fun over there. It's not all hard work. A lot of funny bills come up, you know. And you always just clown around, you know, pass the time and get them put into a committee that you know will embarrass the chairman of the committee. You know the bill isn't going to pass anyway. This Samish, who was the boss in California, no question about that, he started to put in a bill to stop this three-day, well, the blood test law in California. This would be quite detrimental to Nevada, because we have a lot of marriages. The first time it came up, Mr. Wingfield sent me down, because I was a friend of Butch Powers, to get it killed. So after I got down there, I called and I says, "Now look, I think the bill will die anyway, but if we kill it in committee (which means that you put it into a committee where it will never get out—it won't get to the floor), I'm sure Mr. Wingfield is going to have it every year," and we did. Then Samish would write the bill every year, and we'd have to pay him off. And they used to do the same thing in Wyoming—on a divorce bill. They would introduce the divorce bill, and then people from Nevada would raise a kitty and go up to Wyoming to kill the bill. They would bring them out on purpose. And lots of times down in our place, just clowning you know, we'd put some crazy bills in, because Russ McDonald would draw them.

ACTIVITIES IN NEVADA POLITICS

EFFECTS OF THE BANKING CRISIS ON THE WINGFIELD INTEREST

The Depression hit in October of 1929. The cattle and sheep market practically collapsed, and the primary loans of the Wingfield banks were to cattlemen and sheepmen, because that was our leading industry. Mr. Wingfield, who many people thought was a very tough, gruff man was really a kind, soft man. Probably, had he closed these people out earlier than he did, he probably would have helped them. There was hardly a rancher in Nevada that wasn't in financial difficulty—well, there might have been half a dozen, but there weren't over that. Things were getting worse, instead of better. Prices were improving, and the people couldn't even pay their interest. The banks had good collateral except the value of it kept going down. Originally, they were not bad loans.

Then 1932 came, and after President Roosevelt went in, you probably remember, he used what they called the RFC—Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

Unfortunately for Mr. Wingfield, and for the citizens of the state of Nevada who had their deposits in the banks, there were politics played in the RFC, particularly in the early stages, for which, I guess, you can't blame them; they took care of their own first. And we weren't one of the first. Thatcher and Woodburn were Mr. Wingfield's attorneys and everyone was working on it. By every right, the Wingfield banks were entitled to assistance. Had they been given that—and it wasn't a great deal—a couple of million dollars, they'd have weathered this storm. But they were not given it, and the banks were thrown into receivership. Phil Tobin was put in charge of one group—I think the state banks—and Leo Schmitt was put in charge of the national banks.

And then we tried a re-organization plan, in which we tried to get seventy-five percent of the depositors to agree to re-organization plan which was to be financed by Gianini, by the Bank of Italy. This is when Graham Sanford came out so bitterly against Mr. Wingfield, which was a great surprise to all of us. And

several other friends (who were supposed to be friends, anyway) , they defeated it. We worked very hard on the re-organization. I would call on a depositor and say, "Here is the plan. Would you agree to a re-organization, rather than to go through liquidation, because this way we're sure you're going to get more money." We got around fifty-eight percent, as I remember. We had a good percentage, but not enough.

So then they started the liquidation, and it was pretty drastic—properties were practically given away. This is not in criticism of the receivers—they had no choice. There was no more money around.

That's when we started to interest our people, that we had here at that time for tax reasons to become interested in real estate. And we had some success with it, although it just took more money than we could raise. So they went through a pretty serious wringer. Elko County—I don't think there had ever been range land, so called, in the history of Elko County for under ten dollars an acre. It went for four, five, six cents. Cow and calf were selling for twenty, twenty-five dollars. Sheep weren't bringing enough to pay the freight. It was a very unfortunate period. Mr. Wingfield in those days had a beautiful ranch out here; it's out Gentry Way, a horse ranch. He had a beautiful stable and race horses, and produced two Kentucky winners. That breed—he'd been working for twenty-five, thirty years on a theory of breeding, crossing certain blood lines and having a great deal of success. This broke his heart, when he had to liquidate.

Mr. Wingfield was harassed, and threatened, and Lord knows what, by these people that lost all their money. You can't exactly blame them. They didn't know the circumstances; they just knew they didn't have any money. This is upsetting—more to some people than others. So John Mueller

and I used to meet him and walk down with him. One thing that he pleaded with them for, hung out to the last minute, he did not want to go through bankruptcy. Well, unfortunately, the bank's stock was assessable, and there was no way of saving him. We finally came to understand that. And we walked over to court with him when he took his diamond ring off his finger—he was very fond of it—and took his watch out of his pocket and all the cash he had in his pocket and laid it on Judge Bartlett's desk. Judge Bartlett was in tears. He says, "Judgie, here she is. This is all there is left." Well, he had hocked and mortgaged his house, his ranch—he had that up in California—and the Golden and Riverside hotels. The Crocker Citizens Bank lie had helped out in the Panic of 1907 by shipping them gold from Goldfield, and there was a very friendly relationship. (This money, incidentally from his house, which was the last asset he had, he put in the bank the day the check came; it went into the bank. He was down to the last cent. Whatever he could raise, he fought to save them.) So the Crocker Bank, rather than foreclose—well, they did fore close, although I don't believe they ever completed the foreclosure—they took title to the property. And they employed Mr. Wingfield—I believe it was \$250 a month and his office and a secretary—to operate the two hotels and allowed to live in his home, with an understanding that if and when he ever could repay the loan and the interest, he could take the properties back.

Well, Bernie Baruch, a great friend of Mr. Wingfield's, who had made a lot of money with him in Tonopah and Goldfield in the early days, told him that if he ever found anything that he thought had a chance, he'd be glad to take a look. So Getchell discovered—he didn't discover it, I forget the name of the man that did, but anyway—Getchell got a lease on the Getchell Mine and brought it

to Mr. Wingfield. It was on railroad land, so they got hold of Mr. Baruch, and Mr. Baruch came out and he and, I believe Newmont Mining, I think they went in at the same time. Anyway, the funds were raised to purchase the land from the railroad—which John Mueller did for them—and build a mill. It was quite profitable. The stock became quite valuable, enough so that Mr. Wingfield was able to go to the Crocker Bank and get back his hotels and his home. Later, the Getchell Mine was sold. They had a stockholders' fight over that after Mr. Wingfield's death and Mr. Getchell's death.

THE BIPARTISAN "MACHINE"

What happened to the Wingfield organization all through this time? He'd had some very, very powerful people in the community, powerful people in the famous old bipartisan machine, so-called—and it was—and we carried it on. I believe in it; I call it government. I think in some of those letters I showed you from Senator McCarran,* he repeatedly says that I was one of the few friends he had that never asked for anything. Because we always felt that you didn't make it out of politics or government; you made it out of the success that government could create. And unless you had political ambitions—you know, to run for office or something like that . . .

George Thatcher was the Democratic national committeeman and George Wingfield was the Republican national committeeman, and they both had the same telephone number. I forget the number—(3-lll, I guess). Then there were all the jealousies that build up around political organizations, and people who are disappointed that they're not nominated, or disappointed they're not elected, and they always blame it on you. They

never look in the mirror to think that it might have been their own fault. And a lot of people are not qualified to run. I would say they ran a darn clean machine. But it was a machine, no question about it.

I don't know if you've ever read Ed Flynn's book, *You're the Boss*. You ought to read it. His success was because his political machine was clean, and he made it a point to keep it clean. And Wingfield and Thatcher the same way. I won't say that they didn't have their favorites. Yes, they did have. But I never saw them use it to—well, I never saw Wingfield even try to use it for selfish interests. Never once. He was accused of it—they all were. But it was by people that didn't know.

You see, when the Roosevelt landslide came in 1932, that was the second time Senator McCarran filed for the office. Anyway, they never thought he had a chance. So they nominated him, thinking, "Well Oddie will murder him." But it just didn't work that way. Poor little Senator Oddie went down to defeat, not through lack of ability, as much as the ins were out. And I'm afraid you're going to see it in 1968, unless we see something. People are frustrated; they're frightened; they can't understand it. Now you're getting the devaluation of the currencies, and all these things coming on all have their effect. You say, well you don't really think a Senator can do much about it but, you say, "Well, he's there, and nothing happens." Or, "I don't want him there." This is the dangerous attitude that voters get into. But this so-called machine, Democrats and Republicans, were behind Oddie, not behind McCarran. So then, when he was elected, knowing this, he used to call them "the boys on the corner." And I was one of the boys on the corner.

*See Biltz papers, University of Nevada library.

Senator McCarran—I never will forget it—in 1932, I was back in Washington for the inauguration of President Roosevelt. I had a seat for my wife and I, and a group of us were up in the Post Office and Roads Committee room, which looks right down over the platform. I'm getting in the elevator and here is Senator Pat and he's got his top hat on, you know, and his swallow-tail coat. I went up and I said, "Senator McCarran, let me congratulate you. You did a fantastic race."

He said, "I fooled you and the rest of your gang on the corner, didn't I?"

I said, "You certainly did, Senator."

So in 1938, I had become completely sold on Senator McCarran, primarily and first of all because of the fight he put up against packing the Supreme Court. A junior Senator who had been there a few months, defying the President of the United States! In many other instances, I thought he showed brilliance as a junior Senator, because normally a United States Senator is there six years before anybody notices that he's there. He's an office boy. Nobody even knows him. He can't find his own office, let alone his chair in the Senate. But Pat wasn't that way. He started out right from the gun. So in 1938, I went over to his office. I had given him space in the Lyon building. I owned it then. He still, well, he liked me, but he still remembered "the gang on the corner." He wanted to believe it and, in his heart, he did believe it, but there was always a doubt, we'll say.

I was always collecting funds for him. Funny thing, an airline company that I asked to contribute to his campaign—a national airline—sent me \$2,000. I gave it to Eva [Adams]. About two weeks later, the Senator got me in his office and he said to me, "Biltz, did you receive some money from such and such an airline?"

I said, "Sure I did." He said, "Why didn't you turn it in?" Looking at me and staring at me as much as to say I stole it, you know. And I think this was in his mind.

I said, "I did, Senator."

He says, "I didn't see it."

So I opened the door and asked Eva if she'd step in a minute. I said, "Eva, did I give you \$2,000 about two weeks ago from so and so?"

She said, "Yes."

The Senator turned red as a beet. He says, "You caught me didn't you?"

"I didn't catch you. I don't blame you." Well, that was quite a battle. But after that one, we became closest, closest friends.

In 1944, this was the knock-down, drag-out. This was the last big stab that Thatcher and Woodburn made to beat McCarran. That's when they ran Vail Pittman. We just skimmed through that primary. Malone was sort of a character and Bunker, I don't know about Bunker. See, there was a battle that developed between Carville and McCarran; to this day, I don't know what it was. But it became quite bitter. So Carville was running for the Senate and word come out from McCarran, "beat Carville." I liked Carville. He's a fine man and I didn't like it, and I told him I didn't like it. He says, "Well, I'm running the show. You beat him, you beat him with Bunker." Well, Cord was incensed because Bunker was a great pal of Henry A. Wallace. And you know Wallace turned out to be not quite what the public hoped he was. Cord knew this, and McCarran knew this, but that didn't make any difference.

Well, Bunker beat Carville in the primary. I don't think Carville ever forgave me. I apologized to him. But I don't think he ever did. And Bunker, I never had anything to do with. It was just that primary thing. He

got beat on his own. I think Malone beat him. I've forgotten who beat Bunker. Ernest Brown, a Republican. An interesting thing, when he went to the Senate, as you know, by appointment, he kept Eva Adams as his administrative assistant, although she had been McCarran's, which is a very smart thing because Eva was the smartest girl on the hill and still would be, if she had been allowed to stay there. Alan Bible kept her for awhile, and then moved her upstairs. So Eva doesn't have the strength that she had on the hill because the executive wanted the strength that she had used in the executive branch, not in the legislative branch. So they watch her pretty closely. Once in a while she'll sneak a favor through and get something done. If I really want something bad I go to Eva and say, "How do I do it, Honey?" And there she goes. And then Cannon, that was sort of an amusing thing. Cannon came from Utah, I think. He was the Las Vegas city attorney. The first time Senator Cannon showed up there, he had on those thick, crepe-rubber soled shoes and a bright sport coat and a bright pair of slacks. He sure as hell didn't look much like a potential United States Senator! He didn't talk like one either. And John Drendel, an attorney here, took Howard under his wing and really taught him how to make a speech, what to say and what not to say, and carried him through the thing. About two weeks before the election, his boy came down to see us and said, "Well, I guess Howard is down the drain. He can't meet his television bill and his radio bill and this is the last three weeks." (They all feel it's so important—a lot more than I do.) "And he's just out of gas. He's out of dough, and can't go any further." So we asked him what it took. And it took \$13,500, so we raised it for him. And he was elected. I've only been to Senator Cannon's office once and I might

have written him one or two letters, but never anything much. That's government. It can get you awful quick. The best way to do it is to wait till one wins and say, "Well, how much deficit have you got?" and pick it up.

When McCarran died, they threw the die away.

Now, about the story of a McCarran-Scrugham feud: McCarran and Carville had a feud and McCarran and Pittman hated each other, but not Scrugham. You see, Key Pittman was a great power in the United States Senate. He was chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee during the first World War. And, incidentally, it's common knowledge that he was a very severe alcoholic and dangerous—carried a gun all the time. I remember once in New York—I was in New York with Woodburn—we went up to his room, and he says, "Stay back from that door, I'm going to blast through it." And I believed him! I didn't stand in front of the door! Yes, there was always a great deal of animosity between McCarran and Key Pittman.

There was always a great deal of animosity between William Woodburn, Sr., and McCarran. and if you go back into their histories, I think they were both city attorneys, both Irish, both United States attorneys (I forget what they were). Anyway they followed office—district attorney, of Washoe, I think they were both district attorneys. And then, of course, McCarran went to the Supreme Court, which Woodburn did not. That animosity was even greater than that between Key Pittman and McCarran.

Key was the favored boy of Nevada politics. McCarran, they just never let him come in, that's all. He'd hammer on the outside but they would never let him in.

Scrugham held a highly powerful position—I forget what it was—in the

Congress. He should have stayed there, because he had all his seniority—I believe twenty-two or twenty-four years. Anyway, some fellows talked Scrugham into running for the Senate. I’m sure Scrugham and McCarran never had a feud. I don’t think so, and I’ll give you a sidelight on it that would lead me to believe not. Scrugham beat Cecil Creel. After he was elected to the Senate I don’t think he ever spent but two or three days in the Senate; he was very ill. And we went down to Overton, Senator McCarran and me, to see Senator Scrugham. McCarran said, “Now look, we got an appointment coming up for a federal judge so I’m going to let you have it. You know, you pick your boy.” And Senator Scrugham said he’d like to ask Ed Clark, who was a great friend of his and ran the power company in southern Nevada. So in about a week, we got work—it was Foley. Well, gee, Foley at that time was a very bad alcoholic, himself. You know, they used to pick him up with the garbage in the morning in the alleys. We got the work, and we couldn’t do anything about it. So that’s how Foley was appointed. Well, Foley knows this, because I talked with him at length about it. So I know there was a great friendship there then.

Malone, I never, I don’t know, I never warmed up to Molly Malone. We didn’t have any arguments or anything, but I didn’t understand his philosophy, his way of working. But Senator E. L. Cord, he was very fond of Malone. I know on that Mechling thing, after Mechling knocked Bible off, much to the surprise of Senator Al and a lot of other people, Mechling called John Mueller and me and wanted to talk with us. I was kind of enamoured with the kid. I thought he was a pretty bright young man. I still do. So we made a date with him. We made a date with Mechling to come up to the office the next day. About nine that night I

had a phone call from a dear friend of mine who was one of the Mechling chiefs. And he said, “Norm, you’ve got a date with Tom Mechling tomorrow.”

I said, “Yeah, nine o’clock. Do you want to come over?”

He said, “No, I don’t want to come over, but I don’t want you to see him.

I said, “Why not?”

He said, “Because I’m afraid he’s going to frame you. And as far as Alan and him, I’m more fond of you. So please don’t see him.”

Well, I said, “I can’t do anything about it. I told him I would see him, and that’s it.” And I thought, “Well, what could he do to me?”

Well, I had just bought one of my kids a tape recorder from Jerry Cobb. I called Jerry and I told him what happened. I said, “I don’t want to hurt this kid, but I want to protect myself.” So I said, “Can you put one of those things in my desk?”

He said, “Yeah, what time is your date?”

He said, “You have to get down there around eight-thirty to open the office.” So I did, and he put it in this drawer and the mike was over across the thing. I didn’t even know how to turn it on and off. I’m not very mechanical anyway, so I said, “Well, Jerry, you’ll have to stay here and when he comes, you start that damn thing for me, will you, because I’ll probably get it all balled up.” So he did.

And then Mechling, in effect, said that if we would back him, we could have anything we wanted. We could have fifty percent of him. That was his expression. I’ve still got the tape.

So John and I got gabbing; and he was there about an hour, I guess. We forgot that damn thing was on, and we said a lot of things we shouldn’t have—we were swearing, and what a jerk this one was and that one was. I have a habit—you notice I’m always playing

with that thing? [Letter opener]. Well, I'll do that when I'm talking, you know. Well, that registered on our tape—this click, click, click. So when we were finished, I called this friend of mine, this newspaper guy, and I said, "Have lunch with me, will you?"

And he said, "Okay."

So I told him, I said, "Now, this is what happened, whether you want to believe it or not, but I'm not going to use this tape for any political reasons. I just want you to tell your boy not to take after John Mueller and me. Just leave us alone and we'll leave him alone. In fact, I kind of like the kid." Because I didn't like Malone, you see.

He said, "Good enough."

So he had a deal going, a radio deal, where he stood on the corner with a truck, and made all these announcements—it was very clever. All the betting was who they're going to name that had bribed him and tried to fix him. So I told my wife the night he was going to announce it. I said, "Well, I'll tell you one thing, Honey; I'll just bet you a thousand to one it's not me." I'd never tell anybody. Mechling knew it, because the guy told him. Well, by God, here it comes; Mueller and Biltz made the approach in Tonopah! So now it's a matter of, you know, your reputation, who is lying. So I'm stuck. Now I got to go. I'd always warned him; I told him I had it.

To this day, I don't know what was on his mind, because I wasn't against him. There was no reason except maybe that he could pick up a few anti-Mueller, Biltz votes, that's the only thing I can think of. He can't even explain it to me yet, and I've seen him two or three times since.

Well, anyway, I sent a telegram to all the press, a representative of every newspaper and radio station in Nevada to come at my expense and hear a tape which I thought would reverse the statement that Mechling

had made about Mueller and me. Boy, they all showed up, too. I had a whole mess of them. I remember little Eddie Olsen was sitting on the waste paper basket, I turned around, and I heard this water and I didn't know what it was; it was tears dropping off Eddie Olsen's chin. He hears this thing (tap, tap, tap). He said, "What's that noise, Norm?" I said, "Eddie, you know I have that habit of playing with that letter opener."

He said, "The tape isn't fixed is it?"

I said, "No it isn't fixed. If it was fixed, do you think I would leave some of the things in there that I said that are damned embarrassing for any of you gentlemen to hear? Believe me, it's not fixed."

Well then, the newspaper came out, "Mechling lied," things like this. But still a lot of people didn't believe it. Among them was Bryn Armstrong and Frank McCulloch. So Bryn came in my office one day (and we weren't too friendly in those days; we are now). And he said, "Norm, where were you on a certain date?"

Well, the date didn't register anything in my mind. I said, "I don't know. Why?"

"Well, I'd like to know. Can you find out?"

I said, "Well, I'll ask my secretary." I asked Jean Green who's been with me forever. I said, "Where was I, Jeannie, on such and such a date?"

She said, "I'll look it up and see if I can find anything." She said, "Yeah, you had a barbecue up at the little lake; you had about one hundred people up there."

So Bryn says, "Huh."

I said, "Why, Bryn? What's on your mind?"

He says, "Well, I'll tell you sometimes."

So then he checked on Mueller. And now I begin to smell a rat. Mueller was registered, and was in San Francisco, at the Mark Hopkins Hotel. This was the day that

Mechling claimed we made the approach, you see. So all these fellows—and I never saw more dedicated young men than the large majority of the press at Washoe County or anywhere, behind a boy like they behind Tom. So they went out to a trailer park where he was in Sparks. Now Bryn smells a rat. He goes out there and he accuses Tom by saying, “You said they approached you at the convention in Tonopah, and I have proof that they were not even there. They weren’t within hundreds of miles of there. Now what happened?”

Tom said, “Well, I’ll tell you kids.” He said, “I tried to dramatize it a little bit.” He said, “What they actually did, they came over to the trailer park here” (where he had a space) “at two o’clock in the morning. And that’s where they made the proposition to me.”

Some of the boys believed him. But going out, Bryn went to the trailer park (office] and he wasn’t registered that day. Frank McCulloch had a nervous breakdown; he went home and went to bed. And I thought Bill Berry was going to cut his throat. The whole bunch of them. And this kid would have been elected hands down. Hands down, he would have beaten Malone.

So now he is running, and we don’t know. So I got curious to what he was doing out here, because he actually wasn’t a resident of Nevada. You know, he’d been at Wendover or something during the war, and he married an Italian girl out at Wells, I think; but he wasn’t a resident by any means. And why should he suddenly want this big position? Well, I found out. I found out he’d been sent out here by a national columnist—and I found out his name, Drew Pearson. And I got a hold of the fellow we used in Washington that worked on the silver lobby, named Arthur Riley. I said, “Riley, I want you to go to this guy,” because I knew that the columnist was a good friend of Riley’s. I said, “You tell him

you’re going to make a canvass of the west coast for something, anything, and you want to know if he wants anything checked, or where you ought to start to get some dope on politics.”

“Yeah.” He said, “Go into Nevada,” and he said, “go into Vegas and get hold of an editor down there named Hank Greenspun. He said, “Then go up to Reno and get hold of a fellow named Tom Mechling, and let me know how they’re doing.”

Well, Riley’s on my payroll. So I told Greenspun some years later, I said, “Remember that champagne dinner you had on your fifth wedding anniversary?”

He said, “Yeah. You know I don’t drink, but it was a hell of a dinner.” He said, “I still remember it.”

“Well,” I said, “I paid for it.”

He said, “What are you talking about? You out of your mind?”

I said, “Do you remember Arthur Riley?”

He says, “Yeah, but how do you know him?”

I said, “He was working for me.” Well, we had a code name for him, “Mickey Mouse.” So Tom met him here in Reno, and he moved in with Tom, and he lived with Tom for about three weeks. But I never used it against him. I still didn’t like Malone. But I think that the sweetheart to wind it up, Cord was happy because Malone was elected. McCarran, you know, went on radio for Malone—I walked with him; we stopped on the Sierra Street bridge, and the tears were dropping down the river, and he said, “Do you think you’d ever see the day I’d go on radio for Malone?”

And I said, “Do you want me to walk the rest of the way with you Patsy? Going over to KOH?”

And he said, “No, I think I can stand it better alone.” He says, “You wait for me back at the hotel.”

So anyway, the race is over and Malone wins by about 2,000 votes. Cord called me up, and he said, "Come on down." (I was home.) He said, "Come on down, I'm down here with Molly and Ruthie." (She calls herself Katie.) And he said, "Come on down; bury that axe of yours."

I said, "Okay." So I went down there and met them in the lobby of the Mapes, and Ruthie came up and said, "You know, if you had minded your own goddam business, we'd 'a won this by ten thousand instead of only two!"

Here I castigated myself, and this is my reward. guess that's one of the reasons why I never liked Malone. But it was a very funny thing.

Then later, we opened Nevada Air Products, and if you'll remember, Mechling filed for governor. We were doing a lot of subcontract work for Douglas. He called me up one day; he wanted to see me. Well, I was just getting over the flu or something, whatever it was and I was full of codeine, and I was afraid to drive. Wallie Warren was in the office, and I said, "Mechling wants to see me."

He says, "Are you going to go through this again?"

And I said, "No, I'm going to meet him, but I'm going to meet him on California Street." So I said, "You drive me out, Wallie, because I don't feel like driving." Which he did. It was way down the end of California Street. It just happened he could hear the conversation. Mechling said, "I have evidence that your contracts that you have at Nevada Air Products were gained by political influence. And he said, "If you go against me in this governors s race," he said, "I'll expose you; I'll see and you lose every contract you have."

Well, there were no politics at all in it; it was made with Douglas Aircraft. Politicians

didn't even know we had it. So I said, "Well, Mechling, you claim to be quite a guy for the people. Now I'm employing 250 people up there. Suppose it happened to be true? Then you'd throw those 250 people out of work to try and blackmail me." I said, "You are not quite the guy I thought you were," and I walked away from him.

That's the last I heard of him until, oh, one time at the Mapes, after he got in that mess in California, you know. To show you the strength of this columnist, the FBI came up, and they wanted to know all about Mechling. You know he had an educational job, and he was selling educational books; something, I didn't pay much attention to it. But we spent, I guess, an hour and a half with this FBI man, and told him exactly what I've told you. So the next thing I knew, Mechling was in charge of the American exhibit at the Brussels fair!

So the fellow's pretty strong. He ran a great campaign. He just had some kind of a funny twist in him. I don't know. And it must still be there, because his record's not improving any! God help us if he'd ever become senator; I don't know what would have happened. But it's a funny thing, all those reporters, newspaper men, that were so solidly behind him, and so bitter at me, without exception, they've all become my very good friends. Byrn Armstrong, Eddie Olsen, Denver Dickerson, Frank McCulloch—I've forgotten, there were others—Bill Berry, John Sanford (I forget about John; I don't know if John was in it or not). But they all were fun.

Cliff Young became very bitter. I think it was Ed Converse and a fellow named Tom Smith that lived in Ely, he had sort of an arthritic spine, walked all sort of bent over. I think he's dead. There were about six of them that influenced Cliff to go for the United States Senate, which I thought was a great mistake because he was doing very well in Congress.

He got defeated, as you know. And you know, he turned bitter against everybody. He turned bitter as hell against me, and I didn't have as much to do with it as the captain on the Lusitania. I didn't have anything to do with it; nothing at all.

Alan Bible defeated him—he still carries a little of that. It pops out every once in a while, a bitterness. Of course, a lot of them do, you know. They never get over a defeat. It was partly because Bible had said that he wasn't going to run. That's it, partly. But, you see, Cliff was starting to get seniority in the House. Lots of times you can be more effective in the House than you are in the Senate. You do have the disadvantage of having to run every two years but, you know, he defeated Baring.

They're not going to run anybody against Walter any more; they're tired of that. Pete Peterson was a great friend of mine. He used to be postmaster. He's a Swedish-Danish, and he says, "That Baring ain't got nothing but the votes." You know, he's made a lot better Congressman than a lot of people recognize. He isn't a great brain, although he's no idiot by a darnsight. But boy, if you've got a problem in Nevada—and this also was true of McCarran—I don't care if you're a Republican or a Democrat or Catholic or Protestant or whatever you were, you just had to be from Nevada, that's all, and he was for you. And this is true of Walter Baring. Great loyalty. Labor has spent a lot of money trying to beat him. Time before last, they really poured it on.

Governor Kirman was probably the finest governor we had in my time, without exception. He ran after a great deal of influence was placed on him, and said that he would run for one term. He would effect certain economies which the state needed, but don't ask him to run a second term. Well, generally, when the bug bites them, they change their ideas. But Kirman never

wavered. He served his one term. He was a fantastically successful governor, a very fair governor, but that was it, boy. And he had more pressure put on him for the second time than there was for the first time. Nobody could persuade him. He just wouldn't listen. He went in to clean it up. I don't mean to say it was crooked, but it gets loaded—that's the trouble with third terms and fourth terms. You know, you keep creating these jobs and you never fire anybody and it builds up like a snowball, and this had happened in Nevada. And Kirman went in there with a knife and just cut expenses to the bone and brought it back on a very reasonable basis. He was an excellent governor. Nobody talked to him except old man Harris. We used to call him "What-else-you-got Harris." You know, you'd go in with a thousand dollar Liberty Bond to borrow a hundred dollars, and he'd say, "What else have you got?"

Sawyer made a good governor, far better than I ever dreamed he would, because he wasn't a stand-out as an attorney, in Elko. I talked with him about three weeks ago. He's sure broadened out.

Maybe I should fill in a little more detail about some of the other campaigns. In the Russell campaign, a lot of our friends were very bitter at Governor Pittman for the very rough time he'd given Senator McCarran in the '44 race. We were looking for a candidate. Charlie Russell, as you know, had been defeated for Congress. He was around Washington—doing little odd jobs.

Johnny Mueller said, "You know, when Russell was in the state senate, he made a pretty good senator. Although he represented labor, he wasn't bitter on it. He's not a bad guy. What's the matter with him?"

I said, "I don't know him very well. You do. You've worked with him." And that's how Russell was chosen.

We came back and we hired Wallie Warren to handle the campaign, and started to put it together. I'm guilty, I guess, of using some of the McCarran organization, which he never accused me of, but I think he knew it. I don't think he was too unhappy about it because that beating Pittman gave him was still stinging. He never authorized us to use it, but see, we had an organization, the McCarran organization, and we had in those days about 1,800 people. Dead loyal people. You could just depend on them one hundred percent. It covered the state. It was particularly strong in the small counties. And we would get daily reports from all these places—where the weak spots were and the strong spots. Charlie Russell was not a very strong campaigner. He had one great asset—those little twins that were about five or six years old. It's a wonder we didn't wear them out, holding them on street corners. We'd say, "All right, Charlie, you go to Lovelock and you stand out in front of Felix's at nine-thirty and you stay there until eleven o'clock, and you say this. And then you go to Winnemucca and you see so-and-so and you tell them this." And it was, from our standpoint, a pretty well-organized campaign.

I don't mean to say that we were the only ones in it, because we weren't. Clark Guild, Jr. who was his brother-in-law, did a fantastic job for him. And Bill Graham, who was always quite a power, had a million friends, and never went against Thatcher and Woodburn in his career, until this time.

He came over to see me and he says, "Do you want me for Russell?"

And I says, "Well, gee Bill, I don't know. You know, we got a tough race here."

And he says, "Well, you want me, you can have me."

I said, "Well, give me a couple of days."

So I got hold of Charlie, and I said, "Charlie, this is, has to be your decision. This

fellow is going to be down asking favors—and if it's possible to do it without causing any trouble—I mean he's going to expect it because he's breaking with friends of a lifetime to do this thing. I don't want to tell him to do it, and I don't want you to accept his help unless you fully understand what you're doing."

So I guess he talked to some of his other friends or something. He said, "I'd sure like to have Bill on my team." So Graham worked his tail off.

Well, it was only a few months later that Graham came to me and he said, "I want to get so-and-so"—not a bad thing. It was to help get a friend of his a license. The fellow got the license anyway. But he said, "I want to talk to the governor about it." You know, Bill wanted to show his power among his friends. So I called Charlie up, and we went down to the mansion at eight-thirty, had breakfast.

I said, "Charlie, Bill has a favor to ask of you."

So Charlie said, "Well, sure, I'd be glad to check into it."

There was a member on the commission that was a friend of mine and he would bring me the minutes of every commission [meeting] which I, you know, sort of had a kick out of reading who was doing what to who. And so this time I got the minutes, and Russell voted against this man. Well, I never told Graham.

Going back a ways, the day after Governor Russell was elected—incidentally, they spoke of the bipartisan machine. McCarran was also running for the Senate at the same time. His headquarters were in the Golden Hotel, and so was Charlie's and Wallie Warren's office. They ran 160 votes apart. The only thing that bothered McCarran was if Russell was going to get more votes than he did. Well, anyway, right at that time, they had a bill up, a national

bill, to tax gambling out of existence. So the day after the election, McCarran and Charlie and I met over at my house. And McCarran said, "Now Charlie, you're governor, and you're a Republican. I'm a Democrat, but any way in the world I can help you, you just send the word, and I'll do anything whatever in the world I can to advise you or help you. And," he said, "there might be times when I'm going to ask favors." So it was very amiable.

Well, the favor came about in this way: McCarran got in touch with me to get a license for someone [Bill Graham's friend] and Bob Allen was on the commission; he was a Democrat. So Pat had told Bob Allen, "Any message I send over there, if Norm brings it, you can rest assured that I asked him to do it."

Meanwhile, this bill was up, and we were frightened to death, because the bill was going to charge ten percent tax on every bet. And this is the end of gambling. We didn't have too much help, because you're not popular back there. The other senators, they just don't want to talk about it; they don't have it [gambling] and they say, you know, "Take care of yourself; we don't want to." I'm from Connecticut, and they don't like it. So we had darn' little help, and the help we had was from the racing lobby, the racetrack lobby, which is very strong in Washington. So McCarran asked me to go down and ask them to hold up. They were going to put a bill through (which they put through, too) disallowing them to take out-of-state bets, as I remember the bill. McCarran said, "I don't care about the bill, but ask them if they'll please hold it up for sixty days" until we get our own trouble out of the way, you know, because we were sweating marbles, I'll tell you that. I was back there for months. Well, I did this. And again, they didn't know I was getting minutes of meetings. Allen was appointed at the request of McCarran because he only had

a year or two years to go to get his pension. He says to Governor Russell, "Governor, I have one request. Will you give Bob Allen a job so he can get his twenty years in?" And this goes back to loyalty. They both voted against McCarran's request for his friend's license.

So McCarran came out, after we'd straightened out that legislation in Washington, and asked them all to gather at the Redwood Room at the Riverside because he wanted to explain his request; the purpose of it, you see, of holding off. SO he explained it; they dilly-dallied around. Their answers were not true. So going out, I walked up to Bob Allen and I said, "Bob, how would you like to have the Senator see the minutes of that meeting?" And he turned as green as green can be.

He said, "Norm, in the first place you don't have them, and in the second place, you wouldn't dare."

I said, "Look, I have them and I dare. The only reason I'm not going to do it is because I know how weak Patsy's heart is, and he might drop dead if I told him." And I never told him.

Well, this was not the end of the social relationship of Governor Russell and me, but the end of the bus mess relationships. I mean, if he asked for advice, I said, "Look I'm sorry." And I've never had anything to do with Charlie politically since then.

Now when he ran the second time, Clark Guild was a very close friend of mine, and he said, "Look Norm, for God's sake. Charlie's very fond of you, you're fond of him, you're fond of the kids and the family. He's going to win. Why don't you come over with us?"

I said, "I'm sorry kid, I know he is going to win, and congratulate him for me, but I don't want any. I've had it. I don't want any more."

But now it's over, and Charlie and I are—I see him often. But that was Russell. I never understood why he did it, because—the fellow

he voted against got the license. He could have made himself a big man with Graham, and Graham could have made himself a big man with his friends. You have to put out some favors; I mean you just can't ignore the world. You have to say, "Well, you know, I scratched your back; now scratch mine." Charlie did it, but he did it with our own people. This is true, I'm afraid, of Paul Laxalt too. When he appointed that fellow Abner, believe me that was not a good appointment, because Abner was 86'd all over town. I don't even know the gentleman. But he turned over to General Services, and the head of that was Jess Larson, who was a great friend of John's and a great friend, of mine. We worked for him all through the second World War. So he said, "Now look, kids, the honeymoon is over. You're not going to get it for no dollar, you're going to get it for \$24,000,000, but I'll sell it to the state for a dollar down, and you pay me as you cash it out." But the damn mine was still in there. We didn't know what to do about the mine. They wanted \$250,000 for the mine, ten percent down, and payment on royalties.

Well, we had some friends down there at one time. We were still working on this thing and they were staying over at the—we were at the Statler and they were on the corner in the—Mayflower. They called up and said, "Come over and have a drink."

I said, "Gentlemen, let's see if we can't sell these fellows that damn manganese mine, because they have some large holdings of tungsten."

So we went over, and I made the pitch. I said, "You know, you can buy it for \$25,000, and when manganese comes back, you can make some dough."

So they said, "Geez, a hell of an idea!" So he said, "Norm, you take a fifth and I'll take a fifty"—five-fifths now I'm in. Now, I can't tell them I haven't got \$5,000 and I wouldn't give

you five dollars for the damn thing. I can't say—well, I'm stuck. So here I am.

A couple of months later, a fellow named West was in, and a fellow named Long. They called up and said, "Look Norm, we'll do some research on the uses of manganese. We'll spend some dough with our outfits. And you and Johnny Mueller pay for the cost of incorporating the company." So we went down to Hugh Darling, our lawyer in Los Angeles, and asked him what he wanted in incorporate it, you know. And he said, "A thousand dollars."

And I said, "Oh, hell." It meant we had to come up with another \$200, you know. So well, we had to come up with a thousand; they were coming up with work.

So I said, "Hugh, how about taking some stock in it?" He said, "Hell, I don't want any stock in it. What's the matter, you broke?"

I said, "No, but," I said, "it's a long shot; you might make some dough."

He said, "The fee too high?"

I said, "No, it isn't."

He said, "Well, how about \$750?"

I said, "Why don't you take some stock?"

So finally, he said, "Well, you cheapskate. All right, I'll take it." So he took 40,000 shares of stock in the manganese mine. Damn if that Korean War don't come on, manganese goes through the roof, and he sold his stock for six dollars a share! Forty thousand shares, because I wouldn't give him 500 cash! We both belonged to the Bohemian Club. Every time he'd see me he'd say, "Hey, I want you to meet the bright old man over here; tell the story!"

I say, "I won't tell it."

He says, "I'll tell it." And, of course, this has been embellished a great deal over the years. It's still a standing joke around the club. Ten times a season it's told.

Well, to get back to Basic Magnesium. The state owns it; Russell's governor. So I went to

Charlie, and I said, "Now there is only one way to dispose of this property, Charlie, in my opinion, and that is by bid." I said, "You should not dispose of it by negotiation. You should dispose of it by bid to get the best dollar you can get for the state of Nevada. And," I said, "Frankly, we will be a bidder."

"Well," he said, "Norm, I'm afraid it would be embarrassing to me if you happen to buy it."

I said, "How can it be embarrassing to you if I'm the high bidder? I'm not asking any favors. I'm not asking to see the bids. I'm not asking anything. I just want it to go to bid."

We'd gone to New York Life. You see, there were all those plants, and the water system. We had a deal worked out where we would wind up with the water system and the utilities and then sell the plants to National Lead and Titanium, etc., etc., etc. So he agrees to this. And we had a bid in there of \$39,000,000, which we had financed through the New York Life. I picked up a paper one night, and Henderson had been sold to the tenants at the state's cost, which was 19,000,000! And the state would have gotten 20,000,000 more dollars, had they put it to bid. And they might have gotten it, but that was our bid; it was put in by Jack Thatcher. And the explanation was the same thing, that if we had happened to be high bidder, it would embarrass him. So the state blew 20,000,000.

Charlie's a very honorable man, very honest, and rather timid, very nervous about criticism. And you can't be, in this job. You know, you have to lay your back open to the whip. Like Truman said, "If you can't take the heat, stay out of the kitchen!"

THE BIPARTISAN ORGANIZATION AND COMMENTS ABOUT LOCAL AND FEDERAL POLITICS AND POLITICIANS

I talked earlier about my first contact with the Wingfield organization and mentioned it from time to time, so I'll try to recall my impressions about the organization and how it operated. To go back a ways, I was raised in Connecticut, as I have told you. My father was very active in politics, at one time was Republican national committeeman in Connecticut. Through him I met Ed Flynn, in my opinion the greatest politician and organizer of them all. And I had some exposure to Tammany, so I'd seen the honest side of politics, as well as the dishonest, when almost a little boy. There were two organizations in Connecticut that I knew of very well. One of them was for good government, and one of them was for profit. And the profits could be quite spectacular, particularly in the early days when they started paving.

In coming into Nevada, really my first exposure was to my employer Bob Sherman's idea—taking advantage of the tax advantages of the state for outside residents—and I was very much impressed with the caliber of

people I found in the government of Nevada. And through that, I was led, by one means or another, to the so-called Wingfield machine, if you want to use the word, or organization, which was primarily the Republican and Democratic organization, pretty much headed by George Thatcher and Bill Woodburn. Realizing the size of the state and its small population (it was really small then; it was barely a hundred thousand people, maybe less), they realized that they had to cooperate, and this was the beginning of the expression "the bipartisan machine."

The dyed-in-the-wool Republicans and the dyed-in-the-wool Democrats were people who wanted to use either one of the parties for political power or for political gain and were not too much interested in it. They felt they had to follow party lines, and I believe, to a degree, that you do have to. I further believe that you have to cooperate and make the best effort, which we used to do, to go out around the state and get the best Republican we could run, let's say from Lander County, and the best Democrat we could get from Lander County.

And when this was accomplished to the best of our ability, we would step aside and they would run their race, and this came down to more party politics in which we didn't try to elect anyone. We tried to get good people to run and let the party organization to work to elect their boy. And this was practiced for many years. I'm dead certain that Mr. Wingfield never made a profit out of politics, as such. He created income coming into the state and, sure, he prospered through his hotels and through his banks, etc. This made a great impression on me. Where I came from they didn't operate quite that way. The Republicans fought the hell out of the Democrats. The Democrats fought the hell out of the Republicans. And they didn't care quite so much as to the caliber of men they were running as to winning the race.

Here, a sincere effort was put forth to find people of caliber and decency and integrity to represent the people of the state. Now I will put Nevada ahead of any state in the union as to the percentage of high caliber people in government—not always the brainiest people, but they had integrity, they had decency, and they had desire to help the state as a whole more than to help themselves. This was my great impression. So in 1932 when Roosevelt's landslide came about, because of the seniority Senator Oddie held, I would say the bipartisan machine was very much in favor of Senator Oddie's reelection.

We had two excellent senators then, Key Pittman and Tasker Oddie. Senator McCarran filed in the primaries. We were sent out to elect Oddie or defeat McCarran, whatever you want there. And due to the, I think primarily due to personal popularity, Senator McCarran was elected to the Senate in 1933. I saw him back in Washington. I happened to be getting off the elevator as he was getting on

to be sworn in. I went over and congratulated him about the inauguration of President Roosevelt. So he looked at me, a very grim look, said, "I fooled a lot of you boys didn't I?" I said, "Yes you did Senator. I hope you'll be successful in the Senate."

He said, "Well, that will be my affair." Very, very cold and very, very blunt.

So when, to me, he was such an outstanding junior senator, I became completely enthralled with his ability, his knowledge, his willingness to fight. In fact, I think he rather enjoyed lots of those fights.

President Roosevelt—they had a man, I believe his name was Hilliard, running in the primary against McCarran. And Roosevelt made three stops over the state of Nevada with his arm around Mr. Hilliard, advising the people from Nevada to get behind—well, to defeat Senator McCarran was his idea. And I didn't like it, and a lot of my friends didn't like it. In fact, he went pretty much all over the United States in this attempt. He did defeat a wonderful old senator, Senator Gore, of Oklahoma. And I believe that was his only success. Because the public, whether they recognize it or not, like to have a distinct difference between the executive branch and the legislative branch. And they just don't like to be told who their senators are going to be, or who their congressman are going to be. Now, they might not even recognize the fact that they don't like it, but their vote shows that they don't like it.

So I worked very hard for Senator McCarran in 1938. I don't think he quite believed me because he always had quite a very strong feeling against what he called "the boys on the corner," which was Mr. Wingfield, Mr. Thatcher and Mr. Woodburn and their organization, and distrusted them—oh, not so much Mr. Wingfield as he did Mr.

Woodburn and Mr. Thatcher. He classified me as one of the “boys on the corner.” But I think he recognized that I did work hard for him. I honestly worked hard for him. And he indicated to me later with a little touch of his tongue in cheek bit that he was beginning to have confidence. So he won that election quite easily.

My big problem was to get Senator McCarran over the primaries, because the Republicans voted very heavily for him, but some of the leaders of the Democratic organization were not as fond of him. So then the battle of 1944 came along, and Governor Vail Pittman filed in the primary. And this, I guess, was the toughest fight of McCarran’s political career. President Roosevelt was accused, anyway, of loading three or four thousand Negroes into Las Vegas, in an all-out attempt to defeat Senator McCarran. And they were headed by a bar owner from West Las Vegas, named Smokey Joe. So we had every reason to believe that we would lose Clark County quite heavily.

We were able to make very definite inroads into Las Vegas, switching them to McCarran. But when the votes were coming in, and his executive assistant, Miss Adams, was sitting out in the outer office passing out drinks and sandwiches, I was sitting in Senator McCarran’s office. By this time, he always called me “boy.” He was about 400 votes behind; we hadn’t heard from Clark County, and a lot of the small counties were yet to come in, but they weren’t of much consequence. He was convinced he was defeated. He said there was no chance.

And I said, “Well, Patsy, let’s wait and see about Clark County.”

He said, “You’re more of an optimist than I thought you were. We have no chance in Clark County.”

“Well,” I said, “Let’s wait.”

He was unbelievably distressed. Well, the votes kept coming in over the radio. The switch came; he was fifty votes ahead. He was brushing back his beautiful white hair, which had been hanging down over his eyes. He said, “Boy, you got a comb?” In time, oh, maybe another fifteen or twenty minutes, he was 200 to 250 votes ahead. So he brushed himself off and got that white mane back in place, and said, “Boy, let’s go out and meet our constituents.” And he was a very, very happy man. And Vail Pittman was a very disappointed man and Pittman’s political backers were very disappointed, because they felt certainly that they’d win that primary. After the primary was over McCarran had no trouble.

Then came 1950. Governor Russell was then running for office for the first time. We helped Governor Russell every way that we could, because of the feeling that had been generated with our people against Vail Pittman, for the fight he gave us in ’44. I remember Governor Russell’s headquarters were over Skeel’s Drugstore, at the corner of Second and Virginia Streets. And Senator McCarran’s headquarters were over in the Golden Hotel, which we owned at that time. So it was only about a block and I was running back and forth, seeing what was going on. First reports came in—Governor Russell was getting more votes than Senator McCarran. And this upset Mrs. McCarran very much, not so much the senator. She was furious. And when the air cleared, Senator McCarran, the Democrat, won by 160 more votes than Governor Russell, the Republican, won with. This was the bipartisan machine. And it was very interesting.

Now, what happened to the Wingfield forces as McCarran, and what became our

organization, kind of took over? Wingfield became as great an admirer of McCarran as I became. Of course, a lot of the Wingfield organization, as such, was hurt pretty badly when President Roosevelt went in. Also there's the bank failures—that lost him a great many friends. He never lost personal interest, but he did lose many organizational interests, let's say. He always wanted to meet the candidates; he always wanted to talk to them and get their view-point. But as far as having a large state-wide organization, that had greatly disorganized. Of course, the Democratic Organization, probably the Democratic administration, continued to improve their position, which is normal.

John Mueller was kind of the link between the two organizations, I mean from the old Wingfield organization into what became our organization. It never was the Blitz organization; I really don't have that much strength. The newspapers called it that. The fact is that it was a McCarran organization because Senator McCarran, during all of his years in the senate, I never heard him turn down a request from a citizen of Nevada if it were within his power to aid them regardless of party. And this gained him the admiration of a great many Republicans, including Mr. Wingfield. He had the greatest admiration for McCarran.

McCarran never overcame certain groups within the Democratic party who resented his giving equal treatment to Republicans, because they were party people, and they were thought "to the victor go the spoils" and it all ought to go there. This was not McCarran's feelings. I don't care how humble a man was or how small his problem was, he'd get as much attention from Senator McCarran's office (to a very large degree through the efforts of Eva Adams) as the president of the power

company, or anyone else. This was the policy, and it was a very healthy policy, and it was a very much appreciated policy. So that during the years, throughout the state we had, or I should say primarily Senator McCarran and his office staff had, the respect and undying admiration and loyalty of (oh, I should have kept the little black book, I lost it some place) 1,800 died-in-the-wool workers outside of Washoe and Clark County, together with, oh, X number of workers in Washoe and Clark Counties, but they ran primarily to the party. Our outsiders were both Republicans and Democrats. We had a majority of the press; we had a majority in respect to the radio.

We had some very bitter enemies in the press, too, primarily in Clark County. A fellow named Zenoff, out in Henderson, was very vitriolic and also flank Greenspun of the Sun. In talking with them later when we became more friendly—they would talk, after McCarran's death. I believe that it was primarily due to a religious feeling that Senator McCarran was felt to be anti-semitic. I know this was not true. One of the closest friends he ever had was an old rabbi who was in his early eighties. But this came about when they drew the so-called McCarran-Walter Act, or the Immigration Act, as it is known. A lot of people don't realize that they didn't write the act; they were chosen to head it, McCarran in the Senate, and Walter in the House. (Much like the Taft-Hartley Act, not primarily the idea of Taft and Hartley.) But they were chosen to lead it.

First let me say this: The so-called Immigration Act was a compilation of maybe a hundred or two hundred acts, many of them conflicting, and this was to clarify the immigration act, as such, and have one act. And this was done, with some additions. The one that started the anti-semitic idea on

McCarran, I'm sure, was that he was firmly a believer that people who stayed back under the Communist rule, and this was to a large degree Hungary, could not be trusted. And he was, of boy! this was his one subject, his tear of the expansion of Communism and the infiltration of Communism into the government. I once accused him, I said, "I suppose you even suspect me."

He said, "Nobody's above suspicion."

He laughed when he said it, but I think he half believed it himself. But, anyway, there were a great many people and they were primarily Jewish people, who stayed back behind the Iron Curtain, and tried to live with it. Well, McCarran believed, and he had some cause, I think, to believe that if he allowed those people to come in, how did he know if they were Communists or not? And this was the thing that he worked on and dreamed of day and night, to block it every way possible. A lot of them were coming in under a so-called "farmer's quota."

McCarran's idea of immigration, which I agreed with him, was that, under the old system, and it was not entirely changed, so many Englishmen were allowed in, so many Germans were allowed in, and so many French and so many Chinks, on and on, you know. And this theory was that rather than to have so many from each nation, we should have so many of each training, or each craft. Example: Nevada needed sheepherders. Well, the best sheepherders we knew were Basques, and he finally got an added quota of 250 Basques because he felt they were needed, and they were needed. So he said, "Why should we bring in people when we have an excess of their craft? Let's say carpenters as an example. When our own carpenters are short of work, let's not load a lot of new carpenters in here and make them shorter of work." This was his

theory. And it has merit, I think far greater merit than "so many Englishmen, so many French."

Right now, our need for domestics is severe in the United States. If the quotas were such, where you could increase the quotas from countries that wanted to come and work in households, it would make sense, you know, to make it easy for them to get in. Right now we're trying to get a Chinese couple out of Hong Kong. Well, this takes a minimum of six months. My feeling is that if there is a couple in Hong Kong and they want to come to the United States, and we want to hire them, and we need them, why should we have to wait six months? But we do. So it didn't change it entirely, you see. But I'm sure this is where the reputation began that he was anti-semitic. He was not, by any means.

Greenspun also claimed that McCarran fell under the influence of racketeers from Clark County. That again is not true. I would say that McCarran knew fewer of the hoodlums, and I know most of them myself, than any man holding public office since they've been around. It's not true. They try, and believe me, they have many methods of sneaking up on your blind side. We all have an Achilles heel and they are expert in finding it, because most of them come from other states where they bribe policemen and state officials and even government officials. So they are well equipped to know how. And a lot of them are very, very likeable people. Fortunately, surrounding Senator McCarran were people that knew how to protect him if he was getting close to one of them. I wouldn't say I was involved in the protection, except to the degree that Senator McCarran, or "Patsy" as I called him, built up a complete faith in me.

He said many times I was closer to him than his own family. And he would believe

something if I told him. I remember one instance. There was the strike of airline pilots. This was when the non-stop flight first started from San Francisco to New York. And the unions got to McCarran and convinced him that over eight hours was too much time for a pilot to operate an airline. So they're out on strike, and they had McCarran's blessing. I went to him and explained to him that an eight-hour flight across the United States was not nearly as tiring as making three or four stops between San Francisco and Chicago, because the tiring part primarily is landing and taking off, and not in flight. Well, he said in effect, he said, "Well, how much do you know about this?"

And I said, "Well, Patsy, I know a great deal about this because I happen to have some very close friends in aviation. People that I completely trust."

He asked me who advised me. I told him. He said, "Yes, I know." There was a meeting the following Sunday in Chicago, of the airline pilots. See, what they were attempting to do was make the airline carry two pilots and two co-pilots, because they couldn't change at the end of eight hours in the air, you see? This was the gimmick. So, I believe it was on a Friday, I know it was on a Thursday or a Friday before the meeting of the strike, Sunday in Chicago, and the union leaders—Senator McCarran called up the union leaders and said, "Look, I've completely reversed my position. You mislead me. You lied to me." And he said, "I want that strike settled. I want it settled Sunday. I don't want it settled Monday." Because this was the approach that the senator was rather prone to take. And being the chairman of the judiciary, and the sub-chairman of appropriations, etc. The committees that he was on, they did not want his animosity. And the strike was settled that

Sunday. The outgrowth of it was that pilots are now limited to flying eighty hours a month, and not supposed to fly over ninety-five hours in any one month. And the truth is, the most relaxing job a pilot can have is from here to Honolulu or here to New York. He just gets up there with his co-pilot and they just get to thirty-one thousand feet and they bring her down.

This McCarran had an unbelievable respect for the law as such, and adhering to the law. I did a great deal of lay work for him, particularly in the appointment of federal judges. He had confidence in me, and he would want layman's opinion as well as a lawyer's opinion. Many and many a man I met who were candidates for federal bench, just to report back to Senator McCarran what I thought of them. It didn't always stand out—my thoughts—but they influenced him to some degree. But he was most meticulous about that. He made mistakes in some instances, but they were honest mistakes. I know sometimes he slowed up appointments to the federal bench as much as eighteen months until he could find a man that he thought would fit the bill. And this is important.

The average individual, I think, when they vote for judge, whether it be district judge or state supreme court judge, or whatever, they don't think as deeply about it as I think they should. They say, "Well, I don't have any interest in a judge." Well, it's conceivable their life may be in that individual's hands, and the quickest way to get an area into trouble is a bad judicial. To me, it's the most important facet of government, instead of the least. However, less attention is paid to it, I think. There isn't as much glamour to it, I guess.

We've been very fortunate in the state of Nevada in our judges. I know very few bad

ones. We've had some amusing ones. I used to get a great kick out of Barney Moran. That's when I first came here. Judge Moran, he'd go to the Baptist Church and the Catholic Church every Sunday. He was a pretty good judge. He had been on the railroad as a—I think—a telegraph operator. He studied law at nights and became admitted to the bar and elected to the judgeship. He was all right. But he was very amusing. If he had a tight decision, he'd just count the votes on each side, you know! And Judge Bartlett, of course, was a character. He was a good judge. All in all, we've had excellent judges.

The kind of things that Senator McCarran was looking for when he considered these different people as judge appointees were, well, primarily he looked for a student of the law. Not necessarily the amount of the law that they knew, but how they handled their practice, how well they prepared their cases, the thoroughness of their preparation, and their presentations. He went very deeply into this. And above all, that exposed to him the man's ability to absorb the law and to administrate it. His decisions are still talked of as among the finest ever made in our state supreme court. Of course, McCarran didn't go to college, I think, until he was twenty-four, or twenty-five. He herded sheep until, I think, his middle twenties. And he went in as a freshman.

Senator McCarran had trouble with the Sun in Las Vegas—over the advertising—that's true. I'm just trying to think. The cause that the advertising was pulled out... I know how it was pulled out and I'll tell you. I'm trying to think of the cause. I can't remember. Some of it was around that gun-smuggling affair that Hank [Greenspun] became involved in. And there was quite a bit of feeling on that because he was running those guns to Israel and there

is some justification in saying that he was not doing it entirely without profit. But it also was claimed that lots of those guns were being acquired from high schools and institutes of learning where they had them to teach ROTC, you see. And this became quite unpleasant. So it was decided, not entirely by McCarran, that they'd just pull the advertising away from Greenspun. He was attacking them—as you know—he attacked one after another. He's a very emotional guy, Hank is. And not always as sound as he believes himself to be, and he was not too much of a constructive element, at that time, in Clark County—and was becoming very powerful. So it was decided to clip his wings.

Well, the courts decided differently. I've forgotten the reason, and legally, it should not have been done. Let's put it that way. But McCarran was not the prime mover in it. You see Hank comes from New Haven, Connecticut, and I come from Bridgeport, and he planted a lot of stories against me, some real rough ones, in the Bridgeport Herald, which is really sort of a scandal sheet in Bridgeport.

When he came out [to Nevada] he was public relations man for Bugsy Siegel. This is not something I'd be particularly proud of. And he had a one percent interest, as I remember it, in the housing of the Desert Inn. He was throwing his weight around to the degree that he was hurting a lot of people. And he's vicious and not always factual. We've patched our differences, but I still wouldn't read him, as an example, as I would read Bryn Armstrong or John Sanford or somebody like that, because I wouldn't know what was influencing him, and he's a very complex person.

So the thing was settled, and the advertising had to be put back in, and I

think he got \$75,000. Then he was harder to handle than ever. He went out for Kennedy. The one thing that he wanted, I guess more than anything, was to get his citizenship back. He knew that I had some association with Kennedy, and it was a very great concern of his that I might block him. I don't carry a grudge; it's not part of my nature. I wouldn't block or hurt anybody if I could help it. I have a letter here I'd like to read into the record. It's quite something, coming from him. This is dated November 8, 1961.

Norman Biltz
Reno, Nevada

Dear Norm,

Thanks for the good wishes. I'm not unmindful that it was your nephew that rewarded me thusly, and I can think of no greater gift, as you know how much I have looked forward to it. Also it is your niece who was so keenly aware of our relationship. I know these things didn't hurt. Thanks again for everything, Norm.

Sincerely,
Hank

He's quieted down. He's an extremely religious person, you know, and I think rather carries a torch. Hank will die believing that McCarran was an anti-semitic. He can forgive no person regardless of their stature, or anything else; if you're anti-semitic, you're dirt, that's all. There is no give to it.

Greenspun tied McCarran and Senator McCarthy together in a great many of their activities, and seemed to think that one was influenced by the other. I think McCarthy was a very unfortunate individual. McCarthy was not all bad; none of us are. He was handled very badly by Cohn, and the other fellow,

Schine. And advised badly. This fellow Roy Cohn that was McCarthy's executive assistant, certainly, in my opinion, is not a man to be greatly admired. (I mean his operation since McCarthy.) McCarthy's approach was very bad. Maybe, whether that was his opinion, or that was what he was advised to do, I suppose no one will ever know. He didn't write his memoirs.

Well, McCarran and McCarthy had one great thing in common Senator McCarran believed, and whether he influenced McCarthy to come to this acceptance or whether they did it jointly, I don't remember, but, Senator McCarran believed completely that there was one being in the United States who directed the operation of the Communist Party. He was completely convinced of this, and so was McCarthy. Patsy told me many, many times, he said, "Norm, I can't get through the cloud. I can't find that person. But I feel his influence all over Washington." And he said, "If I throw up a hundred false balloons, if I make a hundred efforts that fail, if I make a hundred mistakes, and do eventually find that one man, I will have served my country well." And he died believing it. I wouldn't dare tell you some of the people he suspected.

When you watch that period, that era—we'll just digress for a minute on the Chinese situation: China was one of our greatest friends. Chiang Kai Chek was loyal. All right. We had three plans presented to our government, primarily our state department. (And if I sound critical, I am.) The most reasonable one, the most understandable one, was the Wedemeyer Plan. Now, had the Wedemeyer Plan been put in over the Marshall Plan, China would, in my opinion, still be our friend. The Wedemeyer Plan was presented about the middle of the week, I forget the date. General Wedemeyer went

up to upper New York state to spend the weekend. He got a call; that call told him to not show that plan to anyone until he returned to Washington. And that plan was never presented. And these are the things that made McCarran suspicious.

I know I had several friends that were in China, supposedly helping Chiang Kai Chek. Hell, they'd send them trucks without parts; they'd send them guns with the wrong size ammunition. Now, how much of this do you put down to stupidity, and how much do you put down to being deliberate? I don't mean to condemn my government; right or wrong, whoever's in there, I'm for them. But sometimes I can't help thinking a little bit that maybe we've been taken advantage of.

General Wedemeyer was broken-hearted. In fact, he resigned from all his clubs. He belonged to a club I belonged to; I knew him quite well, and he just retired, just fell out, forgot it.

Why? I mean why could we be so stupid as to lose the friendship of China? Sure, supposing Chiang Kai Chek was stealing. Most all of those countries always have, and they always will. The same as in Cuba, why throw Batista out? He'd already stolen his load; he didn't have any reason to steal any more. He had it. So when he's got it, leave him alone and let him stay there. That's my philosophy. Every time you changed the government of Cuba, they took the treasury with them. They took it all, moved it out. So why not let the guy stay? And again we see the error of our ways. Batista was no lily, but he was a better man than Castro.

And these things were happening repeatedly. Leaks. Remember the secretary of state that killed himself? Or was murdered by a boy, supposed to be a homo?

We can't deny the fact that over the past twenty years, or even thirty years,

Communism has made stupendous strides, primarily at our expense. Senator McCarran was not of a mind to accept all of this as stupidity. He said, "We've got to stop them."

Well, McCarthy was that way too, only he went to further extremes. And I know McCarran was responsible for many, many, many investigations in the hope, as his expression was of "getting through the clouds." He admitted that many of them were wrong. And had he been able to do it, and if there is such a person... Remember White of Massachusetts? It was a mistake to bomb him. Remember him?

Undoubtedly there were leaks, and undoubtedly they'd been very costly. So I guess history will have to decide whether they were right or wrong. steal any more. He had it. So when he's got it, leave him alone and let him stay there. That's my philosophy. Every time you changed the government of Cuba, they took the treasury with them. They took it all, moved it out. So why not let the guy stay? And again we see the error of our ways. Batista was no lily, but he was a better man than Castro.

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EVA ADAMS, McCARRAN'S ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Eva Adams was probably one of the most interesting characters that I have ever known in government, first because of her fantastic knowledge, her breadth of knowledge. An example, she learned the hard way when she went back to Washington as executive-administrative assistant. She had not had a great deal of experience in politics. Her real field had been education. But she had an unbelievable memory and a fantastic capacity to absorb. And as she developed, Senator McCarran threw more and more of the responsibilities of office to her because of his other activities, primarily the Judiciary Committee, because he was a great believer in the law and a great admirer of the law.

So Eva not only developed personally very, very quickly, but as she came in contact with the other senators and the other administrative assistants they were very quick to recognize her abilities. Whether it was her own idea, or whether she was asked to do it by some of the other senators (I never asked her—I'm going to ask her when she comes out for Christmas—) she started a school for administrative assistants. At that school she taught them how to run a senator's office, to be the most help to their senator. She used to hold that school two or three times a week for a long time. The result was that the administrative assistants who, we'll say, oh, execute probably from twenty to sixty, or seventy percent of the

votes of the senators because they depended on them. You know, "You research this and how do we go?" She had this unbelievable group of administrative assistants that when they didn't know, they'd come to her.

On the other hand, when Senator McCarran wanted something done, he'd say, "Eva, do you agree to this?" Or maybe he didn't say that. He'd say, "We're going to do this." And little Eva got the job done because she had the admiration and the confidence not only of the assistants, but of the senators. So I believe that if I were to have to choose one individual that, in my political experience in Washington, was the most powerful, I'd choose Eva Adams. I'd choose her above Senator McCarran because she had that smooth way of getting the job done, and ruffling the fewest number of feathers.

It was interesting when Ernest Brown was made the United States Senator by appointment, a Republican, that he kept her on as administrative assistant. This is rather unusual. I would say you probably could count it on your ten fingers the times that it had happened. And he had great faith and great admiration for Eva. Well, when Brown left about... Bible I think followed Brown, if I remember. And he kept her on until, what is it? Two, three years ago he moved her upstairs, and now she's a great deal of help to the executive branch. They work her to death. I don't know how many speeches a week that girl has to make. Selling bonds.... She's a tremendously loyal person, too. Believe me, it's been a great privilege for me to know her as well as I do know her. We are partners in a ranch so we have big meetings all the time at our ranch. And I talk with Eva at least once a week. I don't know how many boys they put through law school. A great many of them, and Eva helped them in every way—worked nights with them. Of course, she put herself

through law school. A very generous person. A great compliment to the state of Nevada, I believe. Too bad we didn't run her for senator. Now it's getting along a little late for her to....

Vernon Adams was a very interesting character, too. Vein Adams worked for Mr. Wingfield many years ago running the mining camps, you know—the restaurants. Vein and I were partners in the potato business. We had another little partner, Frank Quilici. So I had about ten years of association with Vein. Eva was born in Wonder. She started playing poker when she was about six and she's still a damn' good poker player. Don't play with her! I won't play with her. She plays just like a man. She very definitely helps to direct election campaigns. When it comes to a philosophy about election campaigns, well, it's just a matter of knowing where you are from day to day. Knowing where you're weak and where you're strong. Try to build up your weak spots.

I always tell people running for office, if they're good friends of mine, "Don't be a damn fool and run because it's sort of a costly hobby, but if you're going to run, don't spend time with your friends. Go out and ring those doorbells, because if I'm going to vote for you, don't be spending a half hour in my office." I remember when Bud Young first ran for the sheriff. I'm very fond of Bud, and he came over for some advice and that's what I gave him. I said, "You go out and you ring forty doorbells a day. I don't care if you don't get to bed until ten o'clock, but every day—not thirty-nine—forty. And do it every day."

And he'd come by the office once in a while and say, "Norm, just let sit down for about ten, will you? My feet are so sore.

I'd say, "All right. Ten minutes. How many bells?"

He still laughs about it, but that's it, and I mean—the whole idea, it's that simple. Convert. It's a job of selling.

Eva kept track of all the finances, and all placing of the advertising, all the staffing of the election offices, and reports, darn near hourly. Say, for instance, we get a call from oh, I remember once Harvey Sewell up in Elko County in the '44 campaign. He was out beating the bushes for Senator McCarran. He was very popular in Elko County. He had a bank there. He'd call in every two or three days and say, "How's it look?" And we'd just say, "Harvey, the reports aren't good out of Elko County." Well, he'd just double his steam, you know. They were all right, We didn't want him to let down, you see. And this, Eva was a past master at. Like someone called up and said, "The Stewart family out in Paradise Valley out of Winnemucca are against your candidate." Well, it was up to Eva to figure out—or John Mueller, who was better than Eva in this particular phase—who was closest to the Stewart family. Who could influence them most?

JOHN MUELLER

John Mueller had a fantastic knowledge of all the people of northern Nevada. Who married who, and who's cousin was who, and where the bodies were buried, etc. We'll just use, as an example, the Stewart family. You call up John and he'd say, "Well, I'll get hold of Walsh or 'Joe Blow.' He'll have the most influence on him. And Mrs. Stewart's cousin is so-and-so." And you see, when the state was smaller and the elections were tougher, it was almost on an individual basis. We had many sources of information, and we followed them up. Old Scrugham used to say, when he ran for office, he'd say, "Well, you know you drive fifty miles to the end of a road. There's nobody in that fifty miles but one family. You know you'll not only get that family, but they'll go into town and say, 'Boy, that Congressman

Scrugham's quite a man; he drove three hours just to come out and say "hello" to us." And this was his philosophy. And he used to do it too. So did Senator Oddie; he copied him. See, Johnny Mueller served as assistant state engineer when Scrugham was state engineer—I believe that was it. And then he was water master of the Carson River and he was water master on the Humboldt River. This put him in contact with all the people on those two rivers. You see, when the rivers were being adjudicated, the adjudication of the Humboldt was under Judge Bartlett. And I believe he was on—I'm not sure if he was on the Truckee or not. If he wasn't, he could quote every inch of water and who owned it. And this brought him in contact with those people, you know. It was a great loss, when Johnny died.

I'll never forget Johnny Mueller. We had one of two law suits we ever had in our lives when we bought the Dunphy ranch from the Hibernia Bank. When we counted the cattle, they were about 800 cattle short. And they had an attorney, I forget his name. As I look back on it, we should have gone to Tobin, who owned the bank. But the attorney, he refused to settle on this thing. So we took it to trial.

John Mueller, I thought, foolishly, enlisted for the second war, because he had quite a fantastic record in the first war. And I thought he was too old, but anyway he did it, more at the suggestion, I think, of Dean Witter, than anyone else. Well, Dean Witter ended up spending most of his time in San Francisco, and poor Johnny wound up in the Philippines and Australia. He was provost marshal of Australia. He was provost marshal of Manila when they took it back, you know. Anyway, we were having this trial, and Mueller was stationed down there across the bay somewhere. He was testifying, and he turned

to the judge and he said, "Your honor, I have to leave here in fifteen minutes."

The attorney for the bank was cross examining him, and he said, "Well, I'm sorry, Major Mueller, but I can't conclude my cross examination in fifteen minutes."

So Mueller kept looking at his watch. In fifteen minutes, he got up and turned to the judge and said, "You have to excuse me judge, I'm on call." And he walked out of the courtroom. And the attorney for the bank was all upset, and he started raising the devil. And the judge said, "Well, I'll tell you one thing, this is the first time in my career I ever had a witness convene the court." He says, "But the court's convened." And Johnny was gone. I found out later that night that he was on his way [overseas] and he couldn't tell it.

So I ran into Tobin, the president of the bank, out in the hall. He said, "What the hell's going on, Norm?" I told him, roughly, and he said, "Well, why didn't you come to me?"

And I said, "I don't think I'd go over your attorney's head. I thought he was acting on orders."

And so we walked back to the courthouse and the judge was still standing around. He wasn't on the bench; he was standing. Tobin went up to him and asked him if he could see him in chambers. And the judge said, "Yes." So we went into chambers, and Mr. Tobin, Cyril Tobin, said, "I'd like this case dismissed." He said, "There was no reason for our taking up the court's time." That was the end of that. We got our money. And Mueller closed the court.

Did Mr. Mueller represent the McCarran attitude in state politics, too? Well, I would say Johnny's greatest activity was in state politics; McCarran was not one to interfere very much in state government. A little while ago, you know, I said it was not the Biltz machine, that it was the McCarran machine. There is always a great deal of talk about "machines"

in politics, and so forth, within the state and in connection with the senator. And people, with many of them it's like using the word Communism, if you don't like the color of his hair, you call him a Communist. Well, many people, for lack of knowledge of how government functions or operates, they call it a machine. And very often it happens with one group that has one philosophy and one group another. You could call almost anything a machine.

I remember when Amy Gulling was named national committee woman, she brought up before the state committee, the state central committee I think, a request that Mueller and I be voted out of the Republican party. It's amusing, further, I think, that I never met Mrs. Gulling. So it's you know, it's always a habit let's say, if they don't know what you're doing or why you're doing it, then you are a machine, and the machine is supposed to be an unattractive thing. A machine does not necessarily have to be, at all. It can be a very constructive thing.

I was thinking about the 1958 primaries when Sawyer ran against Archie Grant and Harvey Dickerson, and one other, and Sawyer's whole pitch was that he was the anti-machine candidate, or the anti-organization candidate, and it seemed to many people at that time that I was supporting Mr. Harvey Dickerson. I was not; Mr. Cord was. Although I am a very close friend of Harvey's. I remember very well when we met over at the Napes [Hotel] with Mr. Cord and a few others. Mr. Cord had a suite over there and he had yellow pads and pencils to write down the returns. So he said, "Take one, Norm."

And I said, "I don't need it."

He said, "Why?"

I said, "Because I don't have anything to write. I don't think Harvey is going to carry a county." And he didn't. Of course, part of that

was due to the fact that Harvey's mother was very ill at that time and he couldn't campaign.

Now the same as Grant—Governor Sawyer—picked it—it is a popular phrase you know, "beat the crooks"—Mechling used it against Mueller and me because he thought it would be effective. And to some degree it is effective, because I don't care how careful you are in consideration of other people's feelings, if you do anything, you have to make enemies. And the more you try to do, you might as well relax to the fact that you are going to make more enemies. I have heard many people abuse John Mueller and abuse me who didn't even know us, and didn't even know what we were doing or what we were trying to do. It might very well have been, in a great many instances, that we were doing things that were helping them. So, if you want to get your puss out in the public, as Truman said, "If you can't take the heat, stay out of the kitchen." And if you don't want to get your puss slapped, why then don't get your face in the ring.

Anyway, what did happen in that 1958 primary with all of this activity and supposed activity going on was—well, Archie Grant ran his campaign from the Elks Club in Clark County, and there aren't that many Elks. Harvey Dickerson is a known poor campaigner. He doesn't like it; he's not good at it; he's really quite shy. He is a very honorable person and makes a fine official, but he is not a good campaigner. Grant just had more ability than the other two, that's all. One story out (I know it was out) that Cord was backing Harvey, and I think this hurt Harvey because Cord has too much money to be popular.

John and I made very few moves, if any. I can't remember any because we were convinced that Harvey couldn't win it, and we were not admirers of Grant, but I will frankly admit that I made a great mistake, because I think Governor Sawyer became one of the

finest governors that I have had the privilege to be under. I say that with all humility, but I didn't believe it when he was running. And Archie, you know, you couldn't get him out of the Elks Club even if you did want to help him. And Charlie, Governor Russell, just couldn't get over that hump.

I believe you have not seen the end of Grant Sawyer. In my opinion, there have been very few people that I have known that have broadened and taken advantage of the opportunities he was exposed to as Grant Sawyer has. I saw him only about two weeks ago. He calls me "father." He was analyzing the coming election, and I couldn't help saying, "Sonny, you've certainly grown up," and he said, "Father, I've taken advantage of every mistake I ever made."

I became a great deal more close to him after his administration began. When Paul Laxalt ran against Cannon, I did everything that I could do, and believe me now, it is very, very limited. I'm not sure I even vote my wife, but people believe I do, but in truth I don't. But I did whatever I could for Paul. First, because I think he is a very effective person, and secondly because I am very fond of his brother Bob... "Frenchie." And we made contributions and helped wherever we could. When it came to the race with Laxalt and Sawyer, I don't think that Paul has, I don't think he has forgiven us. In time he will, I believe. But Grant Sawyer had been, in my opinion, such a good governor, and I felt that he would make a far greater governor than Governor Laxalt.

Grant sat in that chair two weeks before the election and said, "What do you honestly think?" I said, "I think, Governor, you're beat."

He said, "Well, so do I. What do we do?"

I said, "We just go down fighting, I'm not going to change my position. I'm going with you right down to the wire." And this was

repeated, I guess, to Laxalt. But I owed it to Sawyer.

I think if a person gives you good government, why then, you owe them a loyalty until you're convinced that there is a better man running against this person. Even though we might not be close—Grant Sawyer and I were never close—I don't think, oh, I would be sure that until this last election, that I had never laid eyes on Grant Sawyer over five or six times. I was in his office once, and it was a social call. I just thought he was a good governor, and I still do. And Laxalt, I hope, will prove himself to be a better governor than I believe he has been to date. I think he has been pretty naive in some of his appointments. I don't think they are for the best interests of the state of Nevada. And when I don't think so, I say so. And it doesn't make you popular.

My relationships with the last two governors have been somewhat different than those with the Russell administration. I was always fond of Russell and I did feel that he was a better governor than Vail Pittman. He was not as great a governor as I believe he could have been. The reason I say this, the people that backed Governor Russell for governor were a completely unselfish group. And they were knowledgeable people. They were people that I would say were among the top brains in any branch of business or effort in the state of Nevada. And Governor Russell didn't use it. He was afraid of criticism, and he was rather shy to be seen with me, which was, to me, silly. People knew that I worked my brains out for him. They didn't have to be told. So he was more liable to be criticized by not seeing me than he is by seeing me, wouldn't you say? I mean, well, people say, "What kind of a guy is this guy?"

And this was true all the way down the line. Senator McCarran offered him anything

in the world that he could assist him with, and explained there was no desire for a reward or anything else. I can never remember Governor Russell ever calling on Senator McCarran for advice—except in two instances. He did ask for a man to head the gambling commission in that day (that was before we had the control board) and Senator McCarran sent him one who he believed to be the finest man he had on his staff as investigator for the judiciary committee. It was a man named William Sinnott. And Sinnott, in my opinion, did an excellent job for Governor Russell, and now is doing, or trying to do, an excellent job for Governor Laxalt.

THE “YOUNG TURK REVOLT”

I recall the Young Turk revolt which was supposed to put new life into the Republican Party. I think it was headed by, supposedly, by Marvin Humphrey, and Les Gray, and a chap who owned a tire company, Marshall Guisti. If my memory doesn't fail me, most of the effort put forth by these people was put forth by their wives because they were ambitious and they wished to get rid of Senator Getchell as national committeeman and some of the other county and state chairmen, I believe. It didn't have any impact or interest to us. I mean my friends, because Senator Getchell was really tired and more than willing to step aside. However, the method used, as I remember, was rather unattractive.

One thing about this group that I do remember; at the Republican convention in Tonopah to elect delegates to go back to the Republican convention in Chicago, we had been as active as possible in assisting Senator Taft to become a Presidential candidate. We really put a lot of work—more even without the state than within the state—aiding. At our Republican convention in Tonopah,

we got delegates pledged to Taft. However, there were not proper controls put on at the Tonopah convention, and at the Chicago convention, several of them switched their vote to General Eisenhower. My memory fails me as to which these were, but I'm sure they were among the so-called Young Turks. If my memory doesn't fail me, Amy Gulling was elected national committeewoman, and was active in trying to vote John Mueller and me out of the Republican Party. I don't know just how this was to be done. I had never met Mrs. Gulling, and to my knowledge, I have yet to meet her. But it was typical of the new group, being naive and without a great deal of political background and know-how, to start something regardless of what they were starting or finishing. And I do not believe that the Republican Party was immeasurably improved by their activities.

CITY POLITICS

Going to city politics, during the time of the so-called “boys on the corner,” or the bipartisan machine, or whatever alias, we had pretty much the same policies as we did statewide, that being to try to interest people of caliber and ability in both parties to run for city council and other city offices. A great many people don't realize that the possibly better type office-holder is rather prone [not] to become involved unless he is encouraged to do it because in this state, there is very little money involved in this.

I would say that the best city council I can remember, aside from the present one in 1967, was about twenty-five years ago. The state and city, of course, was much smaller then and had fewer problems, so possibly they looked good at that time because they didn't have as much work to do as does the present council. I would like to say that as of December 1, 1967,

I believe we have the best city government that I have seen since I have been in Reno. And they certainly, in my opinion, are doing an outstanding job. They're all dedicated men; there are no selfish interests involved that I have any knowledge of, and they really work hard at it.

The Committee of Fifty, which I actually was not a member of, was put together by very attractive business people. They put in a great deal of time and effort to do very much what we used to do in the age of the bipartisan machine. As I think I've stated before, when Senator McCarran died, my active part in politics ceased. They still had my good wishes, and I believe I did make a monetary contribution. That would be very small, and I don't think that they gave over a couple of hundred dollars to each candidate. I don't believe they did. I've the figures exactly. They were merely to defray the advertising expense of the individuals, and some needed it and some didn't. I know instances of people who did not need it and did not take it. Certainly it was done at the highest level. I don't believe there were any selfish interests involved in it. There might have been some we could not see on the surface but, anyway, I don't believe there was.

Speaking of committees, several years ago, the culinary unions decided to pull a strike, and they were pulling it over the Fourth of July. In those days, that's when we ran our rodeo. Here we were with thousands and thousands of people coming into Reno and they were going to close all the restaurants and close all the eating houses and close all the bars, which they succeeded in doing for a short period. I was active in that instance, when we organized what we called the Committee of One Thousand. Actually, I think we had about 200 members. Our wives and families made up food, which we served in Powning Park,

free. I worked as a bartender at the Riverside Bar. I have to say that to my dying day, I'll have a great sympathy for bartenders. In those eight hours I had the sorest feet in the world, and the sorest finger from ringing that cash register. However, through the efforts of that committee, when we called on the different organizations and the union leader, I've forgotten his name, he was told he'd better settle it or some unpleasantness might come about. I don't exactly know what we meant by that, but it was a threat, anyway. And the result was, as I remember, in less than forty-eight hours, the union organizer or leader left town, and the town was back to normal. It was really a lot of fun there. One of the members of the Committee of One Thousand, so-called, saw the union leader and took him back to his pick-up, just pointed to the back of it where there was a rope and a barrel of tar and a bunch of feathers. He just looked at the leader as though "I wonder if we're going to have to use this?" I guess you might call it a threat, but it certainly placed an idea in the union leader's head. But anyway, it was over very quickly.

I think organizations like the Committee of Fifty are of value because they bring out a public interest, and they fight, well, let's say, the laziness that most people have at election times where they make very little effort to see who runs or who doesn't run, and then they get some unattractive city officials. Then they start screaming for the next two years or four years. So it at least alerts the public to the point of interest in who does run, and it's healthy. It also discourages the type of individual who runs, let's say, completely for selfish interests, because good guys always win over the bad guys is their argument.

I did not have any part in the Bud Baker recall campaign. As I say, I'm pretty well out of politics since Patsy died. I tried to influence

Len Harris not to run for mayor. His wife was my secretary for several years, and when Len came out of the Navy as a gob, he wanted to open a market. At that time we owned the Nevada Packing Company, which was the largest meat packing company in town, and we extended to Len Harris a \$25,000 line of credit, which allowed him to get started. He worked very hard. He built that into a small chain. I remember we were having a barbeque down in Bill Cashill's basement. Len got me off in the next room and said, "What do you think about my running for mayor?"

I said, "Well, Len, I think you're making a very grave mistake." The same advice I'd give any young man who's just starting his business. "You'll find that it will take all your time, and your business will suffer, and you're not yet ready to take on the financial responsibilities that this is going to retract from the business and your family." This upset him quite a bit. In fact, all the time he was mayor of Reno, he avoided me with a passion. The only time we came back together again was the night of his defeat, when- he came in the office and admitted that the advice that I gave him would have been—had he followed it—would have been the greatest, and he was now faced with bankruptcy, which was very unfortunate.

People who enter politics very often don't realize that it's a great sacrifice if you're active in business. You can carry this back to Mayor August Frohlich, who had a successful soap business when he went into office—he wound up broke. Mayor Cooper, who had a very, very successful dry goods business on the corner of Second and Sierra—he wound up broke. These are just a few examples of the financial problems that can be created by holding office. Senator McCarran, at the time he went into the Senate, I know was worth close to a million dollars, and he died, and we

might as well say it, quite a poor man. I've seen hundreds of instances in my life. You sort of wonder whether it's worth the sacrifice. Then, on the other hand, if a person is financially able, or maybe retired—I believe that men that have had early retirement are among those whom I would chose to run for office because they don't have the business worries that a man active in business does have. I guess Mayor Baker, it broke him too—I don't remember. His administration was not a very successful one. They were always feuding, and a lack of co-operation, whether it was due to the mayor or whatever, I never knew. But it wasn't a very healthy one, I don't feel.

Mayor Smith was often criticized for making a profit in the job. His father and I were partners years ago in our construction businesses. Fine individual. Tank Smith took over his father's business, which was a very successful one, and he was a very straight-thinking, good-living individual. Of course, during his term of office he was accused of influencing business parties or organizations, but if he did, it was to a minor degree, because let's look at the overall result. Ready-Mix just went through bankruptcy and Tank lost his business and developed some habits that weren't conducive to success. And all of this, I think, you can attribute directly to the job of being mayor. You see this so often in governors or any elective office. It's rather common knowledge when a governor goes through a hard race—even an easy one—and winds up in the mansion, he thinks he's on a picnic. The things he sees that enamour him, if he goes into a night club, he gets a front seat table; he gets the velvet mitt wherever he goes. He goes to the airport and they roll out the red carpet, and this is quite enjoyable for any individual. And if he isn't terribly careful, he is going to soon realize that the job of being governor is not being properly taken care of.

And then, many times, they are never able to straighten out. I've seen this in many instances, in many states, including Nevada. With high officials, be it the mayor, governor, senators, congressmen, (although the senators I don't think have the opportunity of missing the boat as much as the governors do). They get enamoured with the glory of the job and forget the hard work that is supposed to be done behind the desk. However, in the large majority of cases, they straighten out. The first six months of a year in office are rather trying to the citizens of the state in many instances, until they get to work.

POLITICS ON A NATIONAL LEVEL

I should mention national politics, or political organizations I've come in contact with through operations here in Nevada. I think any person involved in government or politics has to become involved in the national races. The first one that I had much contact with was President Roosevelt's, and that was not in Nevada; it was in New York. That probably was the best-organized campaign that I can remember.

I remember very well Ed Flynn saying that for President Roosevelt to win, they had to conceive a plan to switch the Negro vote, which more or less was still voting for Lincoln. He, with the very fantastic abilities of Mrs. Roosevelt—I say abilities, maybe appeal is a better word, as she did a great job in changing the Negro vote. Of course, prior to that untold numbers of Negroes had moved to the northern cities out of the deep South, where they either were not allowed to vote, or they were not interested. They really organized them, particularly in Detroit, Chicago, New York, and Oakland, California. And they did switch their vote. President Roosevelt was elected.

During the Truman campaign, of course, the betting was ten to one that Dewey would win it. But there is an interesting sidelight to that. The Southern Pacific ran a train for the candidates, which starts up right at the Oregon border and runs down to Fresno, as I remember, maybe down to Bakersfield or San Jose, I've forgotten exactly where it runs. They had been doing this for a number of years, and fantastically enough, the people that showed up in a little town called Dunsmuir, California, will tell you that a three o'clock in the morning, there to greet a candidate was Bob Gilmore, (a great friend of mine) who was vice-president of Southern Pacific. His job was always to manage this train for the candidates. When it was over he would always call me up and tell me who was going to win the national election. Well, this sounds absolutely stupid, I know, but he called me up after the run, and he said, "Norm, I got news for you."

I said, "What's that?"

He said, "Truman's going to win that race."

I said, "Well Bob, you've been right a couple of times before, but isn't this pretty long shot?" He said, "No sir, you can bet your money on it" And like a darn fool I didn't bet it. You could get all the ten to one money you wanted that Dewey was going to win it. History showed different. Truman was elected.

The state of Nevada was not particularly active in that national election, aside from the political chairmen and party workers. I don't remember much excitement among the citizens as a whole. There wasn't, as I remember, much conversation about it. It was sort of accepted that Dewey was going to win it, and Harry just hit that trail.

In passing, I would say that I think history will show President Truman was among the greatest presidents this nation ever had. Among his attributes, he never alibied, he

never forced a decision on his cabinet, or if he made it himself, right or wrong, he stood by it. He was very popular with the photographers and the press. And a lot of people don't realize how important the photographer is. You had that [problem] with President Eisenhower. He was not popular with the photographers, for what reason I have never known, so about every time we were faced with some type of serious problem or catastrophe, they'd have a picture of President Eisenhower playing golf with a broad grin on his face. Well, this was just murder. Where with President Truman, you very seldom saw a photograph of him or a press release, that wasn't attractive. They did the best they could to make him look good. At one time I had some discussions about the Pendergast machine with some of the people that were in it. It's quite an interesting story. It's about the American Presidents Line. A man named Bill Cavalier, and K. T. Keller, then president of Chrysler, and Stanley Dollar, the head of the Robert Dollar Company, Jack Millar of National Automotive Fibers, and I were up fishing on the Rogue River. We were sitting out on the porch in the afternoon, and Stanley Dollar was reading the paper. And he said, "Good Lord, look at this." He said, "They're selling the American Presidents Line." I believe it was to the then-Ambassador of Norway, for \$13,500,000, to be approved by the proper authorities in Washington. He was buying it from the government.

Stanley, who had quite a bit of preferred stock in American Presidents Lines, and had formerly owned it, had about \$19,000,000 in cash in that company. He said, "Norm, do you think you could get hold of a friend of McCarran's or some of your friends, and block this sale? Or, we'll go in and bid it."

"Well," I said, "I don't know," but I went to work. That ended my fishing trip. And we were able to have the sale set aside.

What had happened was a very amusing thing. The American Presidents Line previously had been known as the Dollar Steamship Company. It had "gone under" during the Depression. They owed the RFC a great deal of money, so the RFC took it over. Well, when you foreclose on a property such as this, the law is that you must offer it for public sale. And if the bid is for less than the amount of the loan, depending upon state governments now, why then you take a deficiency judgment against the borrowers. Well, due to the fact that you couldn't give the Dollar Steamship Company away at the time, the RFC did not go through this formality. They took the stock, which they did not offer for sale, and leased the Dollar Steamship Company to the Maritime Commission. Well, the second war came on, and the Hoover was sunk, and several other boats, which brought in large stuns to the Maritime Commission. They in turn turned this over to RFC, with the result that they repaid RFC all of the loan, plus all of the back interest. Well, now, here's Mr. Dollar's stocks; they had been taken over because of non-payment of loan has now been repaid in full. Had they left \$1,000 in there, nothing would have ever happened. But we didn't know this at the time we started to acquire it through bid. So then we attached it and claimed return of the securities on the grounds that the loan had been repaid. And legally we were proven right. We went to the Supreme Court. Involved in the stock was about ninety-four percent of the common stock of the then-called American Presidents Line.

During all the years that the government felt that they owned it, they used it to some degree in aiding in political contributions. For instance, you might have a rope company; maybe American Presidents Lines might buy some rope from you. And this went over the

years. The Signal Oil Company sold all the oil. The Pendergast Meat Company, Kansas City, sold all the meat, wherever it was bought any place in the world. And this involved large sums of money, many, many millions, in fact. And this is why the government fought so hard not to give it back to us. They would have been glad to give it back if we would, or could, agree to destroy the past records. Well, we couldn't agree to this because there was about six percent of the stock in the hands of the public. And if we agreed to such a thing, the stockholder with a hundred shares could have sued us for the amount of the difference that should have been there, or could have been there, let's say. It wasn't a dishonest thing; it was favoritism—a typical, to-the-victor-go-the-spoils business.

We took it to the Supreme Court and we won it. They started another attack when we took it to the Supreme Court. The second time we won it. During this time, President Truman was very upset. The RFC had been closed out and the assets had been transferred to the Department of Commerce. So we demanded the return of the stock. And President Truman, who had told me that he was going to fight down to the wire against American Presidents Line being taken away from the government, wrote a letter to the Secretary of Commerce, where I have a copy of in my file—or a photostat.

The second time that it ever happened in the history of the United States, a cabinet member was instructed by the President to ignore the order of the Supreme Court. (The other was President Jackson.) We then filed a criminal case against the Secretary of Commerce, and he threw up his hands, and then it was then agreed that we could bid on the purchase of it, “we” being the Dollar group. We agreed not to bid over \$13,700,000. The property was bought for between fifteen and

sixteen million, and we received \$13,700,000, but we didn't get the Dollar line. We were just as happy anyway. It was a very interesting case. It went on for about five years.

We took a very active interest in the Taft Campaign. And I believe this was the worst case of back-room politics I ever saw. You probably remember that General Eisenhower was neither Republican nor Democrat because in the military they don't vote. But due to the efforts of Len Hall, Sherman Adams, and Dewey, they interested or influenced General Eisenhower to become a candidate. They also had the backing of General Motors, and Ford, and some of the other larger corporations. Senator Taft had the good wishes of Chrysler.

Anyway, we come to the convention and Taft was out in front. But in the southern states (where it has always been a practice and probably still is to the best of my knowledge) to use as an example: Mississippi—their delegates are not elected in the same manner that ours are. There aren't that many of them anyway, so they get together and just decide Bill Smith and Joe Brown will be a delegate. And this was common practice and common knowledge. So they showed up at the convention which was in Chicago. Two groups of delegates from about five of those states—I remember Georgia and I remember Mississippi—there was a friend of mine that was a delegate from Mississippi—and Florida, I think... I forget. There were four or five of them, anyway. And they challenged the so-called (let's call them Taft) delegates. Well, it came up before the committees, and the first case was decided against Senator Taft. The next case was the same. In fact, I think all of the rest of the cases Senator Taft would have won, but he called in his people and said there would be no more cases. I remember that very well.

Ben Tait, his cousin, said, “Bob, if you take this position, we’re going to lose the nomination.” And Bob replied (—and I always remembered it distinctly—) that he would rather not have the nomination than to destroy the Republican party. So the others were not heard and the so-called Eisenhower (we called them Dewey) delegates were put in.

The night before the election—we’d been living on dexedrine and coffee for three days and never got to bed, trying to get delegates. Across the street from our hotel was the California delegation. Well, Ben Tait and I were appointed to go over and see what we could do with the California delegation, headed by then-Governor Warren. Well, it was about—I’d say eleven, twelve o’clock at night when we got in. I wasn’t the spokesman. I was just the errand boy, I guess. Ben did all the talking. We were with the governor, oh, for I’d say the better part of an hour. And the governor insisted that on the first ballot California would pass. Well, we knew we’d run the line out. Stassen was in there fussing around, trying to get the nomination, too. Finally we were just so darn tired—we knew the show was over—so Mr. Tait, Ben, said to Governor Warren, he said, “Look, the great state of California has passed on the first ballot in the last two conventions. I’m going to tell you something, Governor. You just go out and vote for General Eisenhower. But do it on the first ballot.”

And Governor Warren said, “Well, I’m not taking advice from you or anyone else; I still say California will pass.” Well, we knew then that Eisenhower was going to be nominated after the first ballot. But when they came to the great state of California, Governor Warren stood up and said, “The state of California passes.” I imagine he regretted it—I don’t know. Of course, he came out pretty good; he even made the Supreme Court!

This, I think was a great loss to the United States, the defeat of Taft at that convention; God, he was a particularly brilliant man. He had great political astuteness. He had great knowledge. A lot of people—labor rammed him for the Taft-Hartley Act, which he didn’t write any more than I did. He was not entirely sympathetic to them. In general he was, but not entirely. And I believe he would have been elected. As history turned out, of course, this sudden vicious illness hit him. (I saw him about two weeks before he died.) He wouldn’t have been there long but I think he would have been a far better president than President Eisenhower, who, to a degree, fits in with what I said about governors. I think he was greatly enamoured with being President of the United States. I think you have to be. On the other hand, I don’t think he ever had complete grasp of the problems of the country. I think he delegated. I don’t think he had the experience to take them on. His whole life had been a military life. I think he enjoyed being President. He had fantastic, beautiful, wonderful human appeal. The people loved him. It was much like Roosevelt’s voice on radio. He could say anything and it sounded like the Ten Commandments. I had no active part in that beyond the Taft effort and the general election. I did take an active part in the Kennedy nomination, due to the fact of family connections and great admiration for Senator Kennedy.

Here’s an interesting sidelight on that. It was accepted that Senator Nixon probably was, and still is probably, one of the great debaters of the United States. And when he challenged Senator Kennedy to the debate, there was a great family confab on it; particularly Senator Kennedy’s father was very, very much against this meeting with Senator Nixon on television. You know, in defense of Senator Nixon, he had been quite

ill prior to the debate, and Senator Kennedy didn't follow the true lines of debate as Senator Nixon knew them. He got Senator Nixon off base and Senator Nixon never got back on base. It probably was the deciding factor in the election, because if you'll remember, Kennedy only won by less than one percent of the popular vote, and this had a terrific effect on the people.

I think this was also true in the Goldwater campaign. Senator Goldwater was so busy answering the charges of the opposition, he never got around to talking about what he was going to do or wanted to do. It was, in my opinion, a very poorly-managed campaign, the Goldwater campaign. Of course, he was very rough at the convention in San Francisco; that lost him a lot of Republican effort among leaders. I only met Senator Goldwater twice. I think he's a charming man. You can't pass on what his abilities would have been as a president because he didn't make it. I believe he would have made a pretty good president. He isn't as radical, as far to the right, whatever you want to call it, as they made him out to be. This is what he was trying to disprove all the time.

It was interesting in the Lyndon B. Johnson campaign for the presidency, which Bobby Baker took a very leading part in, that he had the backing of very, very large percentage of the Senate. They were actively out working hard for him. At the time, I talked with Joe, John F. Kennedy's father, who was working out west here. I told him we'd get at least ten votes out of Nevada. Well, between that time and the time of the convention, Senator Bible, particularly, and Senator Cannon, to a somewhat lesser degree, came out and they really campaigned for Johnson, as though they were running for office themselves. The result was they switched about five votes.

Governor Sawyer had just been recently been elected and hadn't yet learned how to control his party leaders or he could have saved some of them, but they went down the drain so, although I'm sure it was not to the liking of any of the Kennedy family or organization to have Senator Johnson run on the ticket as vice-president, it was, as it turned out, probably the smartest thing they ever did, because without the power that Johnson had, and the healing of the wounds—so-called—again, Senator Kennedy would not have won. He was a man of destiny.

PAT MCCARRAN AND JOHN MUELLER: PERSONAL VIGNETTES

I've talked a lot about Nevada politics and politicians, two in particular, Senator McCarran and John Mueller. I'll sort of summarize what I think these two men have meant to Nevada politics, and my contacts with them.

John Mueller, I believe during his life, the last thirty years of his life, was a most influential individual in Nevada politics, because he was not only took an active part in it, he loved it. And he had much the same regard for politics as McCarran had for the law. He just abhorred any semblance of dishonesty or unfairness. And he was called the eighteenth senator. Which is very true. (I spent a little time in the senate.) I don't believe there was one Senator that disliked John Mueller or distrusted John Mueller. He was working twenty-four hours a day, thirty days a month, and year after year, giving assistance to these men, whether they were in financial trouble, or marital trouble, or whatever their problems were. Johnny was always the father confessor and Johnny was the boy that went to work.

I remember an instance when they were going to take this big sheep ranch, that of the Jenkins Land and Livestock Company, which is the Marvel family's in Battle Mountain. They had a big loan with the government. It was right up to foreclosure. And it was before Judge Norcross, and Johnny went in, and got word to the judge that he wanted to see him. So the judge called a recess and went back in chambers with John. John convinced him single-handedly that the success of that ranch depended 100 percent upon these individuals, and the economy of Lander County depended 100 percent upon their keeping their ranch. And, by God, they did keep it! And it was John Mueller, nobody else.

And when the Henderson Bank went broke, he spent the better part of two years there. He's the one that got me into the ranch business to bail out the bank. The first thing I knew, I'm in hock and the bank is even. But Johnny—it was his life.

A man that is somewhat similar to him is Wallie Warren. He was the one we had hoped would succeed John Mueller. He doesn't yet have the intimate knowledge of darn near every individual in Nevada, that Mueller had. It was unbelievable, you'd pick out the name, I don't care what it was, whether he lived in Paradise Valley, or wherever, he knew who he was, and who his mother was, and who his father was, and when his grandfather came here, and all about them. And he'd just rattle it off like this [snap]. He didn't have to refer to any letter.

For a summary of McCarran, I think I can best give it from a letter. It's a little lengthy, but these are his own expressions, and they are confidential expressions. This is a letter written in reply to my inquiries as to what his decision was going to be when they were going to offer him the federal bench, which,

naturally, is the greatest honor an attorney feels he can get.

Roosevelt, after he attempted to defeat McCarran, with Hilliard, as I remember, had started the wheels rolling to have the Senator made a federal judge. And no one knew what he was going to do. Most lawyers, as he felt toward lawyers, would have taken it. So I wrote him. Told him to destroy the letter I wrote him, and then I called him. And this reply is dated February 21, 1945.

My Dear Boy,

I have your nice letter of February 16, one typewritten, and the other in your own good hand. Needless to say, I am grateful for your thought in writing as you did. Don't you think for a moment that the problem you discuss is not a point of bewildering consideration to me. It has two phases, one of which is highly spiced with selfishness, so to speak, and the other is compelling by reason of the condition through which this country is passing and through which it must pass in the next six years.

(This, as you see, is his answer to my question. Is he going to take the federal appointments?)

Not infrequently I get discouraged. I find myself continually thinking in terms of the law as I know it, and the Constitution as I was taught it, and the country as I regard it, and democracy as I believe it should be. I see in every hand threats to all these conceptions that I formed and that I have retained and will always retain.

I thought for a long time that the threat to our way of life and to our form of government was in a section

of the Democratic party. But I come to a rude awakening when I find out this peculiar section runs through party lines. Witness the vote on Henry Wallace: When we sought to have the confirmation come to the Senate for action, we lost because often votes on the Republican side of the chamber, these votes being against our motion. And we were compelled to make up the George Bill and defer action on loss.

I am very frank with you when I say that I don't think this country was ever confronted with a greater threat to future democratic existence, than lies in the nomination of Henry Wallace. Shorn of the great lending agencies that have been attached to the Department of Commerce, some of his activities will be curtailed if he is confirmed. But the Department of Commerce itself, without any regard to the lending agencies that belong to the RFC, is already powerful, and can be made a much more powerful department. I am of the belief that Wallace will be confirmed for the Secretary of Commerce. And even that does not run in conformity with what I believe to be the best for America.

I have gone off on a tangent in this regard to you. I will now desist from that and return to my primary discussion, that the matter of accepting the judgeship is a matter that has two sides. It is an alluring place to me because of the fact that the court covers the entire state. And as a court of last resort is about ninety-five percent of the cases that come to it. It

is a place of great power locally, great honor and commanding great respect. Then again, it is a life place and with its no contingent problems of politics. Between these two trains of thought I travel from day to day.

Also there is a third phase to the question that is in my mind, and that is the welfare of my state. The political field in Nevada is not encouraging, when one considers what might happen under certain contingencies. There are few people who know the limitations of some who might come into places of great prominence. Some people have lived on a name and have carried political weight because of that name, whereas, as a matter of fact, little or no common ordinary ability prevails within the individual. Some people have been fortunate in having been selected from obscurity and placed in high positions. And they have, by reason of lack of understanding, and ability, turned on the very agency that selected them in the first place and promoted their welfare throughout. These things pass through my mind.

Then there is the fourth phase to the question, and one that is inspired largely by sentiment and a desire to be faithful to an imposed trust. The public official who is chosen by the people for the highest gift within their power must be ever mindful of the trust that is placed in him, must be ever alert to the fact that he is not always a free agent, but must harken back to the loyal friends and the great confidence which they, his friends, have imposed in him. One

who occupies such a place at a trying hour in the nation's history cannot close his eyes to the responsibility nor leave by the wayside, as it were, those who placed their confidence in him and who selected him because they believed he was the one best suited to meet and cope with the great national emergency.

I have dwelt at length in my letter of grateful acknowledgement that you might know of the thoughts passing through my mind from day to day. This decision can be made by me, and me only. The expression of my friends, who like yourself, have outlined their thoughts have been gratefully received, and yet it still remains for the individual, myself, to make the decision.

I hope you will keep this letter in strict personal confidence, as I know you will. May I also say that your letter, having it, means a great deal to me. I hope you will keep in touch with me when ever anything of mutual interest comes to your mind. And again let me express my gratitude for your thoughtfulness in writing it.

With kindest personal regards and all the best wishes to you as always,

Pat McCarran

I think that covers it better than I could cover it. He took his responsibilities and his state seriously. don't care whether you were his biggest enemy, if you needed assistance from his office, you got it. I remember one instance. We had a ranch up out of Winnemucca. He got me on the phone and he says, "Boy, have they got any wood on that ranch of yours in Winnemucca?"

And I say, "Well, I don't know. Why?"

He said, "Well, I got a letter here from Tuscarora. There is an old miner up there, and he broke his leg. And he can't get out to cut his winter's wood. And don't you think you could make it possible for him to have his winter's wood? Will you load up a truck and take a load of wood to Tuscarora?" And this is the depth that McCarran would go to for a constituent. And he didn't know whether he voted for him or not.

He had great humility. He loved the little man; he had far more respect for the little man than the influential man, which he expresses in that letter that I read. He poured his heart out there. Boy, did he want that job! I went back [to Washington] and he came up to the apartment, up in the hotel. We had a few drinks and, like a great many of the Irish, he's very emotional. Boy, he was sitting on the edge of the bed, crying like a baby, and the tears running off his fat old chin.

This also is interesting in passing, you know each state has the right to put two of its citizens into the Hall of Fame. Nevada had not used either privilege. When it was decided to put McCarran's statue in the Hall of Fame, partly through my influence (I was on the committee) , we chose the Sheppard girl [Yolande Sheppard] to do it. And she did a beautiful job. At the time they presented it—it's in the rotunda of the capitol as you probably know—the guests were invited and the men who were the members of the Senate. And they had, in this particular instance, Cardinal Spellman, who made the main talk. By all the records that are available, McCarran had twice as many people at that presentation than for any other statue that had ever been put in the Hall of Fame. Now this had to show their regards, because when you're dead, you know, you're a long time dead.

Even Senator Dirksen showed. Senator Dirksen and Senator McCarran didn't always see eye to eye. He made a speech. Of course, he's full of blarney. I adore the guy. And he started off his speech (he always waves, you know; he doesn't use notes or anything; his hair all messed up). He said, "Dear Senator Pat, I walk through these Halls of Fame and I shall stop every day to counsel with you." I started to laugh; I couldn't help it. I could see Pat spinning in his grave: "I'll tell you, son of a buck, I'll tell you nothing."

“THE DUKE OF NEVADA”

A couple of writers from *Fortune* magazine were going to be in Reno. I knew they were coming, and I was getting out of town! There happened to be a tight on in Chicago, so I took my lawyer, Bill Cashill, and we were going to go back to the fight. I was going to duck this *Fortune* business.

I got down to the Riverside Hotel. We were going on the train, and I think it left at twelve or one o'clock in the morning I went in to get some money. And Wingfield Jr. came up and he said, “Norm, I want you to meet a fellow over here.” He took me over and he said, “This is Freeman Lincoln*. He’s looking for you. He’s from *Fortune*.” Well, goddam! I didn’t know what to do, so I said, “Well, Lincoln we’re going to the fight in Chicago. Maybe you’d like to go along?”

“Well,” he says, “I’m out here to do you. Can’t you do anything without you, so fine.” So he got on the train. Boy, he got drunker than hell!

We got to the fights. There is a Negro fighting, and a white fellow. A friend of mine, Bob Cavanaugh, the the insurance man,

had really put the red carpet treatment out for Us; we were right at the ring, you know, the best seats in the house. This damn Lincoln kept jumping up and, “Down with the niggers! Down with the Jews!” Down with this, down with that. And I thought we were going to be killed before we got out of this place!

So we went back to the hotel. Now he is really loaded. He is so loaded he thinks I’m his wife—keeps calling me “Virginia.” I couldn’t get another room, so they had to put him in the twin bed with me. All night long he was mumbling about Virginia. I didn’t know who Virginia was until he sobered up, and then I found out it was his wife.

Well, we came back, and on the way back he said, “Now look, I want you to be careful of one thing. The rewrite girl I have, named Edith Roper, doesn’t like anything about you. In the first place you’re German.”

*Freeman Lincoln, “Norman Biltz, Duke of Nevada,” *Fortune* magazine, (September, 1954), 140-154.

I said, "Well I'm only a quarter. And," I said, "I didn't choose to be; I'm not ashamed of it."

"Well," he said, "her family—she's Jewish—her family were some killed and the others broke by Hitler. And so she has sort of an obsession about it. And so," he says, "I want you to be doubly careful of what you say. And don't talk about anything that you want 'off the record,' because this girl will really cut you up, because primarily she hates you because you're German and secondarily because of McCarran." You know most Jewish people felt.... It was entirely untrue but they had the idea anyway. So we started. Gee, they took over a thousand photographs. They were here for three weeks. They sat in the office and, I guess, maybe half-way through, this Edith Roper (we had an interview like this) she said, "Mr. Biltz I'd like you to know that you are a type of character that I abhor. I have no respect for you, and I want you to know it."

"Well," I said, "that's fine, Miss Roper, I can't help it." A few days later we went to Lovelock. And we had developed up there a ranch called the Nile. We went through the fields, and through the feed pens of the cattle. And I'm gabbing. And I said, "You know, if there is anything I have done in my life that I am really proud of, it's this, for the reason that when in the fall I see the carloads of grain going out, the carloads of hay, I transpose in my own mind into the milk and the bread. I've given to posterity a piece of land that could feed 50,000 people. And this is my monument." And I feel that way, because I lost about \$3,000,000. And, my God, it's there!

You know, that girl changed like that! In coming back she said, "You know what I told you about?" She said, "I want to take every word of it back." She said, "You are kind of a character I like."

Every time I go to New York I see her. She had a daughter, and the daughter had heard her mother talking about me, and asked her mother if she could meet me. I always stay at the Drake. Edith is still working for Fortune (and that's why I don't know if this should be made of record or not. Because we're great friends, she and her husband. God, she'll quit a story or anything else. Or if I want to plant a story in Fortune, all I have to do is call her and boy, it gets in there. And I've put in about twenty). So her daughter came over, and I took her down to an old restaurant. One trip I took her down there for lunch—to an old Irish restaurant down on 21st Street, called Cavanaugh's— and, you know, I'd gab with her, and kid with her, and she was about fourteen years old. I gave her a gold nugget once. She'd never seen gold. When she graduated, her theme was "the person I like the most," or something like that. And it was me, you see. And then she went on to college, and when Edith told me she was leaving for college, I sent her an orchid. This was the first orchid she'd ever had. So this is a change, a complete switch. Edith will do anything for me, and I will for her, too. But I didn't talk off the record! But she did do this; the rewrite girl really writes those. The editor works you over to get the information, and then the rewrite girl really writes the story. So when we had it finished, which was two or three months later, damned if Lincoln didn't call me up—he's dead now—Freeman called me and he said, "Norm, I've got a peculiar request."

I said, "What is it Freeman?" Because I used to drink with him all the time when he was back here; I thought maybe he wanted to come out and go on a brannigan, or something.

He says, "Edith was wondering if you would like to have Wallie Warren" (he was our

P.R. man) "come back and go over this and see if he feels you would want any changes!" That was developed into a really lovely friendship. She is a great girl, a great writer.

Then the other one is Time. This was the time of McCarran also. And this was when I got involved in the Mechling situation. Frank McCulloch was then working with Time, and they wanted to do a cover story, on me. So I went back, and talk about an inquisition! I'd been drunk all night, and I felt awful. We go to lunch and there are sixteen editors. They're sitting around the table, and I was at the end of the table, and I'm still drinking. And they keep asking me very leading, and very often embarrassing questions—you know stuff that is none of their business. After all, you do have some private life that you're just not interested in exposing. For instance, they say, "What does it cost you to buy an election out there?"

Well, you know, I was getting hotter and hotter, because I never paid off a dime on an election. I said, "Look I'll tell you what you can do, you bastards. You can take your story and you can write it any damn way you want to. I've had it, and I'm not going to answer another damn question. And I'm walking out."

It was right in the middle of lunch. I had about eight old fashioned while I was there. So I walked out, and Louie Banks walked out with me. He is still the business editor of Time and I haven't read Time since, because it is a slanted magazine; it is not like Business Week or it is not like U. S. News. This thing is slanted, and even Luce can't do anything about it. The writers' guild starts operating, and... boy, I still get hot about it! So I didn't make the cover.

Then they sent a photographer over the next day, which happened to be a Sunday, and we were going—C. L. Smith and Errett

Cord and Bill Smith were going up to Canada to go salmon fishing, leaving that afternoon. So this very attractive young lady came over, a photographer, and she's trying to get me to loosen my tie, and sit on the edge of a bed, and put a cigar in my mouth—I don't smoke cigars—and take a picture of me telephoning, you see—the crooked politician. Now, I did part of it—it's around here somewhere; Johnny Mueller had it framed—but I wouldn't put that cigar in my mouth! That's how far they'd go.

GAMBLING IN NEVADA

I think it's common knowledge that gambling, as it exists today, is a strong contributing factor to our economy, not only through the taxes derived from it, but from the attractiveness it holds for people who like to gamble, and that includes, probably, a huge majority of the population. And through those taxes, I think we've been able to finance a great deal of publicity for the state, increasing its tourism. I don't think it is a hundred percent effective —gambling—but I would say it would be the major contributing factor to the state's attractiveness to tourists. Most of the large casinos have booking offices in Los Angeles and San Francisco, some in Denver, Chicago, all over. All of which encourages the growth of tourism. And this would not be financially possible without the income from gambling.

I've been questioned by different industrial firms interested in coming into Nevada, and one of the first questions generally put to you is, "Well, we're a little bit worried about exposing the employees in our organization to gambling." And I'm sure I'm right in telling

them that Nevada doesn't make gamblers; it cures gamblers. The reason I say that is in New York, if you want to bet the numbers or go to a crap game or go to horse race or whatever you want to do, if you want to gamble there is a little bit—I don't know—you think you're breaking the law a little bit when you go to a floating crap game in New York. It has a certain—I don't know how you'd say it—charm, or well, you know, you think you're being a bad boy like when you drank during Prohibition. But when you get out here, you see it every day, day and night. Yes, I say when a person first moves out here, they gamble a little bit, but you see it every day, you soon realize that mechanically, percentages, you can't win. For this reason, I say we cure gamblers, because we expose it to them to such a degree that it isn't—you're not cheating, you're not hiding under a bed shooting craps. They very quickly tire of it. And this, I'm sure, a study would prove out. I know myself, because when I came out here, I'd break into a sweat every time I saw a pair of dice, I loved it so much. Within a year or

more, you couldn't get me to stand up to a crap table any more than you get me to try to fly off the Golden Gate Bridge. I'd be embarrassed to have anybody see me and say, "Look at that big sucker standing there." And this, you know, is very true. Very true.

Once there was a great deal of, I wouldn't say exactly hard feeling, but some degree of jealousy, of the smaller counties against the larger counties due to the fact that they had to police people coming in and out of Reno, we'll say in Ormsby County, or in Pershing County. Not only have automobile accidents happened, but the increased traffic, attributed to the gambling and tourism, increased the cost of their county government quite substantially. There was always concern that if gambling were put on a ballot, that it might be defeated.

Senator Cord was the prime mover in putting through some legislation I thought was extremely intelligent and good thinking. Now they take the gambling tax and they distribute it among all the seventeen counties, the result being that the smaller counties now have a very nice income from the gambling tax. And I think it alleviated any opportunity for gambling to be voted out. At least I'm darn sure it wouldn't be voted out in a small county. Esmeralda County, which has about four hundred in it, as I remember, got so much money they don't know what to do with it.

But then there was always a great deal of talk about that with a certain influential people in Reno. So when we built the Holiday Hotel, I told Mueller and I told my partner Stanley Dollar, "If you'll stand still for something, I want to try something. I want to experiment with something. Let's open the Holiday Hotel without gambling, with a lovely lobby and all the things that these people who are against gambling say they want and will support." Which we did. And the week after it opened,

I got a boat and went around the world and left poor Mueller, which I guess was sort of a dirty trick. You could shoot a cannon through the place. I think on a good night we might have had five percent occupancy.

When I got back, Mueller was getting pretty upset about it. We were in debt about \$300,000, a loser in the hotel operation. We had it designed so gambling could be put in physically, if necessary. So we contacted Newt Crumley from Elko, and gambling went in, and the Holiday for the last three or four years has run about ninety-five percent occupancy, instead of five. And I don't hear any more from the die-hards about building them another public place without gambling.

Senator McCarran had a rather hard time during periods in his life, defending gambling as it is, against the federal laws. I remember one particular time that they were about to introduce a bill of federal tax, which in effect would tax ten percent on every bet. Well, now, giving an example: the odds in a crap game, we'll say, are about two-and-a half percent. So put a ten percent tax on, you wouldn't last an hour. All the money that was on the table would be in the tax collector's hands.

I went with Bill Cashill to Washington and spent the better part of a couple of months. I remember the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee (I forget his name now) he was a very strict Baptist. He was between eighty-five and ninety years old, I guess. Well, instead of having a hearing aid he had one of those old-fashioned horns. And he had a son who was sort of a reprobate, I guess; I didn't know him, but he told me he was an alcoholic and a pretty rough character, much to the Congressman's disgust. And we needed this man. We needed him damn bad to get the legislation blocked, remember? You see, the Senators and Congressman, back there, not having gambling, as such, as we have—I mean

there are twenty-seven states in the union that have gambling, legal gambling, where you can gamble on horse races, and dog races, and bingo games, and lotteries, whatever. They are all the same thing. I mean the same effect. It is gambling. I don't care whether it's a slot machine or a horse race. Except a slot machine might only take five percent away from you and a horse race will take twenty to thirty percent away from you.

Senator Eastland, on the Judiciary Committee, and Senator Bridges from New Hampshire, also on Judiciary, and great friends of Senator McCarran, did take some position in it. It was carefully done because, well, as I say, they just say, "Well, that's your problem, not ours."

The ones that did us the most good was the race-horse lobby, which is a very strong lobby in Washington. Race tracks. We were able to convince them that if this went through against poor little Nevada it might spill over onto them. So they did take an active part in helping kill that legislation. Of course, it's easy legislation to pass because you're one out of fifty. The others say, "Well, we don't have any interest in it, so paddle your own canoe." God, you don't even have a paddle. The only thing you can work through, really, is sympathy—that and trading votes, doing something for a senator from, say, New Jersey. And if you ever saw eight or ten busy errand boys, it was us during those two months, doing all the favors that we could do for all of them.

It was touch-and-go there for three or four weeks. That bill was coming out on the floor, and whenever it came out on the floor, you can just bet your life it would have passed. You know, you don't have enough friends. Luckily we killed it in committee. And for some unknown reason, this old fellow with the horn, he went along with it. And he was reached, funny enough, by a gambler

named Benny Binion from Las Vegas. Also, a tremendous influence with Senator Kefauver. And we knew this. Kefauver aided us with this old chairman of the Ways and Means Committee.

Incidentally, Kefauver was morally a most unattractive man. When around women he was disgusting. And he was a bottle-a-day man with the bourbon, too. He was not quite what the public thought of him.

The Kefauver investigation became a television show, you know, out of all rime or reason for the original idea of it. If it didn't have good public appeal, nothing happened, you know. And Reno, Nevada, was never visited by Senator Kefauver, which might be attributed to requests of some of his friends, I don't know. But he, if you think back, he didn't come here. And he spent a very small amount of time even in Las Vegas. There were certain people there that he had to call, but he wasn't tough. This, I think, was through the effort of Senator McCarran and Senator Malone. I don't mean to by-pass Senator Malone by any means or Congressman Baring, but Senator McCarran, primarily through his chairmanship of the Judiciary Committee was, I think, pretty well conceded to be the most powerful senator in the United States Senate. He ran it with an iron will.

I was talking just a few minutes ago about McCarran's role in trying to defend Nevada's gambling. That book, "The Green Felt Jungle," tried to tie him to some of the southern Nevada racketeers, like Dilates, and some of the others. I happen to know a little bit about The Green Felt Jungle, because I'm in it! They placed, as a matter of fact, Senator Pittman on ice in Tonopah—said he was dead two days before the election. This is typical of the gathering of lies put in by Reid, who wrote the book. And when it was published, three people called me. One was Dr. Muller, and one

was Sister Seraphine of St. Mary's [Hospital] and the other was Silas Ross of Ross-Burke Mortuary. And they all said, "Now Norm, you've got to sue that man for libel. Because we know he died in St. Mary's Hospital, and we know when he died." Because Sister Seraphine was with him; Dr. Muller was with him, and Mr. Ross picked up the corpse. So they knew that it was a deliberate lie.

The story back of that book is quite interesting. I saw the book, and I saw the manuscript about six months before it was published. In fact, Bryn Armstrong had it. The offer was \$50,000 not to publish it. And there were some in there that were in favor of paying. But it created one problem: when you're dealing with a man of that character, you've got to stop him from writing it again. Another point: Goldwater was not in the original manuscript. Goldwater was added to

I've forgotten the name of the book that had a "fact" on Gus Greenbaum, who was a gambler and was murdered in Arizona and was supposedly a great friend of Goldwater, which I believe he was. This book said that Greenbaum was a drug addict, on heroin. Well, it just happens I knew about that. The fact was that Greenbaum was dying of cancer and he knew it. And it was a painful type. His doctor said, "I can make you a lot more comfortable, but what I'm giving you is a strong narcotic, and a habit-forming narcotic. But you'll be a lot more comfortable. It's up to you," he said, "I'm not going to give it to you unless you know what you're doing." He said, "You will never become an addict, except to the point that you will be a controlled addict, and we will govern what you need."

Now, Moe Dalitz I knew in Cleveland; I knew him in Detroit many years ago. And Moe Dalitz was never close to Senator McCarran. Never. I doubt if McCarran ever saw him a half a dozen times in his

life, because McCarran was not one to go to nightclubs. He had no interest in them. He'd take a drink, you know; he'd take a tumbler full straight. He'd take about two of those and he'd be dizzy. But he never was much of that type. And those people have no attractiveness to him. They all, naturally, try to get in the act. But if they wanted anything, particularly Moe, he would have come to me, and I don't ever remember him calling on me. He wouldn't have gone to McCarran. He was part of that group that withdrew the advertising, but that's because—it wasn't because of McCarran—I mean Greenspun was beating on their back worse than they were on the Senator's back.

Naturally, in politics you get contributions from the gamblers. In most of the instances—the public college among them—the people running for public office—gamblers give to both sides. This is in most all cases. Occasionally you'll find a fellow go one way. This would be particularly true of Pappy Smith, and probably true of Bill Harrah. But they don't you see, they don't need federal help, aside from that one question of taxation. So aside from their liking to be "on a winner," that's why they bet both horses, they don't have any contact with Washington. Because of the way they've been brought up and educated, most all of them have run against the law in other places where gambling was illegitimate, and they had payoffs to officials. And this is one of the things that we used to go to work on, to break them of, when they did come into Nevada. Explain to them, you know, the honeymoon's over, they don't have to do this any more. Just behave themselves, that's all; and stay out of politics was always our advice to them. You let your lawyer handle it, or let somebody else handle it, but you stay in the background. Don't get your puss out in front. And if you think back, most

of them do this. Very few gamblers you see active in campaigning, politics, that I can remember.

PROBLEMS IN POLICING GAMBLING

Governor Laxalt right now has a lot of people perturbed in the state because he is following the request of the FBI and the Internal Revenue Service, in respects to gambling. Well, among the things that Internal Revenue Service wants is that records be kept of how much Norman Biltz lost, where he lost it, and this could do more to destroy gambling, or to hurt gambling than any single thing. I'll tell you why: say the Internal Revenue Service puts some of their men at the fifty-dollar window at the race track, and they keep records of people that buy fifty-dollar tickets and then they start an investigation on them. Well, the smart fellow won't buy fifty-dollar tickets: he'll go over and buy five, ten-dollar tickets. They're not watching the ten-dollar tickets.

Then let's take "Joe Blow," he has a gasoline station in Sacramento. Well, it's reasonable to believe that Mr. Blow doesn't ring up the two dollars every time he changes a tire; it's only human nature. Or the grocery store, the one-man grocery store, probably doesn't report the odd dollar; say, he reports maybe 900 of 1,100. This is going on, and you are never going to stop it. But this can frighten the devil out of "Joe Blow" from Sacramento who comes up here. He has saved up a thousand dollars and he is going to spend it now, he is going to have a record. Well, this is going to raise the devil. And you can see it, I mean mechanically, it could only operate to a small degree anyway, because if I were doing it, I'd come in and say my name was Oscar Schultz if they asked me. I'm not going to say I'm Joe Blow. You can't stop it, but you can frighten people.

Now they want all kinds of devices that are going to protect the state against skimming and so forth. To a degree, I agree. But to the 'nth degree, I don't. For example, we'll take grocery stores. Their loses from shop-lifting are five percent. The Safeway Company has been at work for a good many years, and they can't stop there, so how are you going to stop it if you are dealing with a commodity called cash?

Now they are talking about having a machine that photographs every bill before it goes in the box. We'll say I've got a hundred-dollar bill. Maybe I haven't paid tax on it, and if I see that thing photographing my hundred-dollar bill, I'll think what are they going to do with that? You see what I mean? And it isn't going to straighten it out.... And you never will stop people cheating on their income tax. I don't believe that I know a lot of people that don't, but I know a lot of people that do. And when they've got that money they don't have to pay tax on, most of them spend it on gambling, or girls, or I don't know what; but they don't put it in the bank, do they? And they don't want to be caught dead with it. So I believe Governor Laxalt is . . . I'm afraid if he follows it, he is getting bad advice.

A man comes in here; he wins, \$10,000. Well, if this place has to report that Joe Blow won \$10,000, then Joe Blow isn't going to play, is he? Because Internal Revenue is going to make note of that and go to Sacramento, and when they see Joe Blow's income tax returns they're going to say where is that ten thousand you won? Not conducive to expanding the industry, I don't think. And when you get down to cheating and skimming, as I say, when you are dealing in cash, it is like having a house with a thousand windows in it. You close one window and another one pops open again. And a lot of it is not the house itself gambling. It's the dealers. Well, one very

easy method they use: say Virginia Jones is dealing a twenty-one game. She has a friend named Joe Schultz, so she lets Joe Schultz win a couple hundred dollars (and this goes on much more than people realize). Well, now her so-called drop, which is the money that is counted in her box at the end of her shift, should run between say twenty-one and twenty-four percent of her play. Well, now she's light because she has thrown off two hundred dollars, you see. Well, now to get her drop up, she'd liable to cheat me if I come along next, to keep her percentage up; do you follow me? The pit boss can't be standing over her every day or every minute, and as long as they are dealing in cash, you're not going to stop cheating.

CONCLUSION

POLITICS

Do I have a particular philosophy of politics? Just good government. Because under good government we all prosper one way or the other. It's a—well, it's a proven fact. No one can challenge it. If we have bad politics, you as the instigator of it might suffer as much as anyone else. I have a philosophy that the hardest thing in the world to do is to protect yourself against a liar or thief, and if you've got a liar or a thief governing your present and future ambitions or life, you're in trouble. I mean you're in deep trouble. Now we've seen some of that in the Harding administration, probably the prime example in my time.

Government is no place for either an over-ambitious person or an untruthful person. And that's what we used to do, Johnny Mueller and me, when we'd go around the state, you know, to the different counties and try to influence people to run. Very often they didn't want to run; they didn't feel they wanted to

get kicked around and get black and blue and have things said about them, and their past and future laid out for them. And it took effort. What we would do, in Lander County for an example, we'd go up there, and Johnny knew darn' near everybody, when there was to be a vacancy or an election, and contact, if possible, almost everybody in the county and get their opinions who they had the most respect for, etc. We'd get two of them; we'd get a Republican and a Democrat, and then we'd go to work on them. And lots of times we didn't get the job done. Lots of times they refused to run. But lots of times they did, when we impressed on them the importance of the obligation that they had to their county, and the respect with which the people in their county held them. We had a lot of arguments, and then, as I told you before, we stepped aside. The Democrats ran the Democrats and the Republicans ran the Republicans.

We had a lot of fun doing it. It gave me a certain amount of satisfaction that John and I enjoyed was the many, many, many-

times-repeated statements of these public officials that we had encouraged to run that we never asked for anything, personally. McCarran made a great point of this. In fact, I have one letter that I have at home for the grandchildren to keep, that I was the only person he knew that not only didn't ask for anything but refused to take anything. And this was a lot of satisfaction. However, I don't mean to say that at no time we haven't influenced voting, but I will say that it was not for any personal or selfish reasons that we expressed our thoughts to our friends. I never was a direct employee of the Wingfield organization, or Pat McCarran. I was in touch with him. John was. John, of course, worked through the banks, for the banks. If they had bad loans, they'd send John out to try to straighten them out, whatever they wanted to call on him for. And then he had extra time that he spent on the government, politics, which they made available to him. I was an outsider that quickly fell in love with Nevada and watching John work influenced me to go help him. And so I got involved really more through John than through Wingfield. And I enjoyed it. Of course, we were a lot younger then and we had a lot more energy.

In this way, I became acquainted with a great many people in the state that I normally—in my business activity—would never contact. I was then in real estate brokerage business, and the people that I met through going around the state, if they wanted to sell their property or buy a property, I knew lots of them came to me for that very reason. Well, otherwise they wouldn't have known me. I wouldn't have known them, either. So it wasn't a completely unprofitable operation.

But we—John and I—never had an argument in our lives. We had our differences of opinion, but they never came to a point of

any unpleasantness between us and, generally, if we did have it we'd sit down and close the door say, "Well..." He would say, or I would say, "Well, let's work this damn thing out. Now you sell me or I'll sell you. But we got to wind up together." Sometimes it took a few days. Generally, if you do that—I think you'll find that if both people are trying to think right—that there is a meeting place, and lots of times you have to say, with me one of the greatest words in the English language, "I'm sorry." Because you can't always be right.

Of course, John had a hundred times the background that I had. Like the time we worked on Henderson. Gee, we worked on that darn thing, I guess, the better part of two years. Now, there was no chance for any gain of any kind until it was decided to put it up for sale, and then we felt we had as much right as anybody else to buy it. And we had a great knowledge of it. We knew it intimately. And I truthfully believe—I know (I'll go that strong to say it) had it not been for the efforts of John Mueller primarily, and me to a much smaller degree, Henderson, Nevada, would be non-existent, because the orders were out to tear it down—cannibalize it. Sometimes we only had that thing by a thread. But I think it was worthwhile. It's been quite a contribution to the economy of Nevada. And where the state could have prospered as a state, the people that the state turned over the plants to, at cost, you know, particularly Ed Snyder, which was Combine Metals, sold it to Titanium, Incorporated, for a million dollar profit above what they paid for it. Just one plant. They got those plants for about, oh, ten cents on the dollar, I guess. See, those plants cost over \$170,000,000 and sold for somewhere between ten and twenty—nineteen sticks in my head, but it's right in there—about ten percent of it.

SPORTS IN NEVADA

I love to shoot and fish, and when I came here in 1927, of course, there was a great deal more of it than there is today. A great deal more game, let me say, a lot fewer hunters.

In 1939, we built that little lake, which is called Incline Lake, on the top of Mt. Rose, for fishing, and we made quite a study of skiing, but never got our efforts off the ground. I never was a skier, myself. In those days it didn't hold the interest that it holds now. We did start to develop a ski resort on Mt. Rose and abandoned it because, in those days, they weren't financially successful. Now, of course, one of the sports that's coming up very fast in this northern part of the state is skiing. More and more every year, it's bringing in a great many people and a great many dollars, and it's been exploited pretty well. Squaw Valley, of course, was a great advertising asset to the area.

And then we did a great deal of deer hunting and bird hunting on the different ranches that we owned and managed, and I was always attracted to the type of man that does enjoy this sport. As a rule, you find they are pretty good citizens and we used to have fantastic deer hunting.

We had a camp at a little sawmill, I think, called Rango Canyon. It was up around ten thousand feet. I remember the first time I ever went up there, I went with Paddy and Howard Doyle. They had a ranch down below where we camped. You know, nine thousand feet it gets awful cold, and all we had with us was a saddle blanket. You know, I was raised in the city. This was little rough for me. I wasn't quite sure I liked it because I damn' near froze to death. And they were kidding me all the time, so the next year I bought a sleeping bag. Well, then they called me "fancy

pants." But I noticed the next year they had a sleeping bag, too. I let a couple of years go by till I got intestinal fortitude enough to buy an air mattress.

This little camp we had over a period of about twenty years. There was Carl Wentz, and Bill Hopper, Jerry Collier, and the Doyles, and Ernie York, and we became so sophisticated we even took a light plant in on the mules when we went in, at the end. Carl Wentz and I were pretty grateful for that because our job in camp was to wash the dishes, and by the time fifteen or twenty fellows got through eating it was dark and we were all working with these carbide lanterns, you know; and they weren't very bright. We weren't too sure we were getting the dishes too clean and not too damn sure that we cared much. But that's how sophisticated it became. Then we built another camp out of Tuscarora, which was a deer camp. When we sold that ranch to Bing Crosby we retained a hundred and sixty acres, and that camp would accommodate about twenty hunters. In those days there weren't—there might be two or three hunters all around Elko. Gee, now I think there was three thousand last year, somebody told me. I don't know—I wasn't up there. I quit deer hunting. One time Ernie Heidtman and I were out on a ridge near Doyle, California. We were sitting up there with the red hats on and everything, and some idiot across the canyon shot, and the shot missed us by only ten or twelve feet, so we climbed down behind the rock and took our red hats off and stuck them on our gun barrels and waved them. And here come two more shots.

So Ernie said, "What do we do, kid?"

I said, "Let's give it to 'em."

We were using 270's with scope sights on them, you know. We started laying them down around their feet, and we ran them

right off that ridge, shooting about two feet behind them. And that night we were in a bar in Doyle. This hunter came in—I surmise it was the same fellow.

He said two men up there tried to kill him. And he said, “I had two shots at a deer, and I guess I killed the deer and they tried to kill me to steal my deer.” We didn’t say a word. Took another drink and had a giggle. And then duck hunting. We organized the Honker Club, which is down out of Smith Valley. And that was primarily the employees of Nevada Pack, that we owned at the time. Then we did a lot of shooting in Lovelock. We used to take, oh, we got some rafts from the army, after the second World War. We’d float down the Humboldt River down into the Sink, get some excellent duckshooting. Still, I think Lovelock is as good as any part of Nevada today for shooting ducks, and geese.

In those days there were, gee, thousands and thousands of quail in the Lovelock Valley. I don’t know how many, and today you don’t see very many. In those days we didn’t have chukar. The chukar were brought in by the Fish and Game Commission. But we did have lots of sage hen, particularly out by Eastgate, and out by Gerlach. The only thing I didn’t like about that Gerlach country was the rattlesnakes. I think one day we killed fourteen of them. Oh, there was a mess of them, and I don’t like snakes.

And then we organized a club on the Toll Ranch where we put in one of the first game management deals, I think, for the state of Nevada. Game management is where we buy the pheasant from California, and release them. And this, according to Nevada law, you can shoot six months, but you’re only allowed to kill seventy-five percent of the number of birds you release. So, in many ways, it helps the state or the county, because they get that excess pheasant. We used to release about

ten thousand a season down there. We never did kill seventy-five percent, so Lyon County picked up about half of them.

I like those sports. I like the outdoor sports a lot better than the indoor sports. I never liked nightclubs very much. In my youth in New York, I used to have to go to the theater almost every night, and boy, I got so sick of it. I don’t think I’ve seen one show in about six or seven years.

Five of us organized the Prospectors Club, which has been quite successful—I think a good adjunct to civic life.

ST. MARY’S HOSPITAL

I always had a tremendous interest in St. Mary’s Hospital. I think Sister Seraphine, Sister Xavier, and Sister Gerard, who are now quite well-known, are three of the most admirable people I have even known. And St. Mary’s Hospital, as it is today in 1967, I would attribute almost completely to the efforts of Sister Seraphine. Fantastic person. She has the nicest way of making you realize that you better give her some money. I remember we made a contribution to the baby ward, the pediatrics ward, when they built the new wing. So Sister Gerard called me and said, “I want you to come up here. I want to show you the pediatric division you helped us build before it opens.” So she took me around, took me to the delivery room to see all the paraphernalia and instruments, tables, and what all they had in there. Walking down the hall toward the private rooms, little Sister Gerard was paddling along side of me.

Where she got the crack I don’t know, but she said, “Mr. Biltz, do you really think it’s all worth it?”

I said, “Honey, it’s something you’re never going to know.”

She's a little doll. She's dreamy now; she's almost completely senile. I went up there last year to take them some trout, and she came to the door, and I said, "How are you, Honey?" (I always call her Honey.)

She said, "I know you from some place."

And then one time—did you know they have a wedding day? Let's see, the day they're made a nun, they become married to God. I've forgotten the date now, Sister Gerard's wedding day, but I always gave her a hundred dollars. I went up a couple of months later, I guess, to see my mother, who was in there for seven years. She came up to me and said, "How do I look?"

I said, "Honey, you look great." I said, "How could you look any different, you've only got one outfit."

"Well," she said, "You're not looking close enough."

I looked all over, I couldn't see anything different—black shoes, black gown. She said, "You don't pay attention to me." She says, "Can't you see what I got new?" She said, "Look at my teeth. This is what I bought with that hundred dollars you gave me. A new set of choppers."

A PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY

I don't think I've ever had any awards or honors. I've never looked for any. I guess I have had some, but nothing of any importance. I think I can summarize my philosophy, my thinkings, just as well by reading something. It's an anonymous poem called "The Guy in the Glass."

The Guy in the Glass

When you get what you want in your
struggle for pelf,
And the world makes you King for
a day,

Then you go to the mirror and look
at yourself,
And see what that guy has to say.

For it isn't your Father, or Mother, or
Wife,
Who judgment upon you must pass.
The feeler whose verdict counts most
in your life
Is the guy staring back from the glass.

He's the feeler to please, never mind
all the rest,
For he's with you clear up to the end,
You've passed your most dangerous,
difficult test
If the guy in the glass is your friend.

You may be like Jack Homer and
"chisel" a plum,
And think you're a wonderful guy,
But the man in the glass says you're
only a bum
If you can't look him straight in the
eye.

You can fool the whole world down
the pathway of years,
And get pats on the back as you pass,
But your final reward will be
heartaches and tears
If you've cheated the guy in the glass.

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